Hafa Adai!

SUNDAY

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

With a new minimum wage hike taking effect this week, what impact do you think it will have on the CNMI economy in general?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

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Screened Porch

A screened porch has practical appeal but another draw is its modest, old-fashioned charm, the jog of a childhood memory.

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Crane Collapse

A construction crane snapped and smashed into an apartment building in New York City, killing two.

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Birth Belied

A report that Angelina Jolie's twins had been born is denied.

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Teregeyo leads 131 sixth graders at San Vicente. **PAGE 2**

Penalty eyed for early withdrawal of pension. **PAGE 3**

Gates OKs Guam buildup preps

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates assured residents of Guam Friday that their needs will be looked after as the Pentagon prepares to transfer 7,000 Marines from the Japanese island of Okinawa to the U.S. Pacific territory.

Gates

Gates surveyed Guam from the air and praised the U.S. territory for being "very hospitable to our military forces for a very long time."

Before departing for the rest of an Asian tour, Gates also had a favorable response to preparations for the coming influx of U.S. troops to the island.

"I'm surprised at the amount of construction that's already under way," Gates said after a helicopter tour over military facilities on the island.

Most of the military construction must still await completion of a comprehensive environmental impact study of the basing of more troops on the small island territory.

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MAN'AMKO ROYAL COURT

2008 CNMI Man'amko King and Queen Rosalia T. Sablan and Felipe Santiago pose for a photo with their Royal Court during the coronation ball Friday night. Inset, Rosalia T. Sablan and Felipe Santiago smile for a photo after being crowned 2008 CNMI Manamko' King and Queen.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Boy spells 'guerdon' to win Bee

By JOSEPH WHITE
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—As it turned out, Sameer Mishra provided more than just comic relief at the 2008 Scripps National Spelling Bee. He ended up winning the title.

See INDIANA on Page 4

Sameer Mishra, from West Lafayette, Ind., holds up the trophy after winning the 2008 Scripps National Spelling Bee on Friday, May 30, 2008 in Washington. AP

Hyatt owner is upbeat about new NW flights

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Japanese company that owns Hyatt Regency Saipan is upbeat about Northwest Airlines' plan to launch a second daily service from Tokyo to Saipan in July.

Hitoshi Nakauchi, president of Kobe Portopia Hotel, expressed hope the new flight will offer much needed boost to the Northern Marianas' visitor industry, which has been struggling with lack of airlift capacity from its largest market, Japan.

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AGNES E. DONATO

Hitoshi Nakauchi, left, president of Kobe Portopia Hotel, poses with outgoing Hyatt Regency Saipan GM Michael von Siebenthal.

Around the CNMI

Teregeyo leads 131 sixth graders at San Vicente

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A total of 131 students from San Vicente Elementary School earned promotions to the junior high school level on Friday, receiving certificates of completion during the school's end of the year farewell ceremony.

The ceremony kicked off with the theme to the movie Chariots of Fire and welcoming remarks from PTA member Joann Ogo and Board of Education member Herman T. Guerrero.

Following the words of greeting, the homeroom top five class awardees were presented.

The top five for Jaime Vergara's class were Dennis de Guia, Colleen King, Matthew Lopez, Jovillelyn Ogoy and Niki Teregeyo.

Teregeyo, the daughter of Alfred and Roselle Teregeyo, had also earned the school's most prestigious award, the Commissioner's Award. She also earned a certificate for being best in Science.

NIKI TEREGEYO
Commissioner's Award

HYE YOUNG OH
Principal's award

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

San Vicente Elementary School graduates listen to the speaker during the SVES 6th Grade Promotion Ceremony, Friday.

Her mother said she could not be happier upon learning of her daughter's success.

"I'm just very proud of her. She's worked so hard and I'm so glad her hard work has gone unnoticed," her mother said.

Teregeyo has been involved in various school activities throughout her years at SVS. She took part in the annual Math Court, the National Junior Forensic League, and the Academic Challenge Bowl.

The top five students in Cecilia Camacho Brett's class were Karen Binuag, Chelsea King, Aalieyan Ogo, Hye Young Oh, and Jesus Sablan.

Oh earned the Principal's Award, which is the school's second highest award. Oh also received recognition for being best in math and social studies.

Ogo was awarded best in Bilingual.

The top five students in Yvette Reyes' class were Jill Ann Arada, Kristine Batac, Frankie Blas, Jaymie Ivan Sanchez, and Jesse Villalon.

Batac was this year's recipient of the Teacher's Award and also received recognition for best in language arts.

The top five students in Ben Rayphand's class were Richard Ada, Hannah Alcardo, Ramon Herrera, Sung Jung Kim, and Suvan Sablan.

The top five students in Valencia Flores' class were Jeraldine Castro, John Duenas, Shanna Mendoza, Joseph Patris, and Leeani Villagomez.

SVS principal Kinai Salas said she is proud of all her students and wishes them the best of luck in all of their future endeavors.

"Reach for that dream that you have and never give up," Salas said.

OIA names Harvard student to Guam for Island Fellows

WASHINGTON, DC—The Office of Insular Affairs announced Thursday the roster of the sixth Island Fellows Program in Washington, DC.

The team is composed of eight MBA candidates from the Columbia School of Business, the Wharton School in the University of Pennsylvania, the Kellogg School of Management in Northwestern University, the McDonough School of Business in Georgetown University, the Harvard Business School, and the University of Hawaii. They will begin the 10-week program in Washington, DC on June 11, 2008.

Matthew Garcia, an MBA student at the Harvard Business School, has been assigned to Guam. He will arrive on Guam on June 18 and stay for a little more than two weeks. While in Guam, Garcia will meet with local businesses and government leaders to identify local priorities for the types of businesses that Guam's business and government leaders believe should be invited to the fifth Secretary of the Interior's "Conference on Business Opportunities in the Islands," to be held in Honolulu in April 2009. When Mr. Garcia returns to Washington, DC on July 7 he will begin to market the next Conference actively, and OIA staff will welcome recommendations for making the next Conference the best one yet.

Garcia will also help OIA introduce a new and exciting business development tool known as "Island Business Link." It is a web-based system designed to facilitate the matching of island businesses with businesses anywhere in the world and is based on the model OIA used for the "business-to-business (B2B) meetings" that were held at the last two Conferences.

While in Guam, Garcia will be conducting several workshops for government and business people on how the system works. These workshops will be followed by one-on-one meetings between the Island Fellow and individuals to answer questions and actually to post some Guam business opportunities to the system.

Over the past few years, the Island Fellows program has made significant contributions to the Department of the Interior's ongoing efforts to promote private sector-led economic development in the U.S.-affiliated insular areas, conducting field research and outreach in support of large-scale events hosted by the Department of the Interior.

The Washington contact person for the Island Fellowship program as well as IslandBusinessLink.com is Ms. Angie Williams who may be contacted at 202 208-3003 or angela_williams@ios.doi.gov. The contact on Guam is Mr. Casey Jeszenka, Director of Pacific Island Small Business Development Center. Mr. Jeszenka, or one of his staff members, may be reached by phone at 671 735 2590, ext.111, or by email at casey@pacificsbdc.com. ***(DOI)***

Who is Matthew Garcia?

Matthew Garcia, an MBA candidate at the Harvard Business School, worked as an analyst for Goldman Sachs' Litigation and Regulatory Proceedings Group for three years in New York City. In addition, he has researched environmental and economic development issues to help winery owners in upstate New York grow their businesses as part of his duties interning in a well-known U.S. Senator's office. He was graduated from Cornell University, with a BA in Government. ***(DOI)***

House wants ban on interisland land swap back

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTION
TO ALL FILIPINO CITIZENS

All citizens of the Philippines abroad not otherwise disqualified by law, at least eighteen (18) years of age on the day of the election and who wish to vote for President, Vice President, Senators and Party List Representatives for purposes of the May 10, 2010 National Elections must file applications for registration/certification as overseas absentee voters from December 01, 2008 to August 31, 2009. The voting period will be from 7:00 a.m. Philippine time (Saipan time 9:00 a.m.) April 10, 2010 until 3:00 p.m. Philippine time (Saipan time 5:00 p.m.) of May 10, 2010. For details please contact the Philippine Consulate, 5/F, Marianas Business Plaza, Susupe, Saipan MP 96950, and Telephone nos. (670) 234-1848 thru 1851. E-mail: saipanpcg@pticom.com, or:

Department of Foreign Affairs (Manila): www.dfa.com.ph
Commission on Elections (Manila): coav@comelec.gov.ph

The House of Representatives has passed legislation that would reinstate the ban on interisland land exchanges in the Commonwealth.

The Lower House voted unanimously to approve House Bill 16-14, which eliminates the sunset clause in an old law restricting the public land exchange program within the respective islands.

That law expired on June 1, 1997.

According to the lawmakers, it is necessary to re-enact this restriction because of "the unique characteristic of real property and the substantial number of private land taking yet to be compensated either through land exchange or monetary compensation."

Hundreds of landowners are waiting for compensation from the government.

In 2003, the CNMI government floated a $40-million bond to settle private land acquisitions. Only $28 million of this amount was actually used for land compensation payments, with some claimants receiving millions of dollars apiece.

Land compensation cases involve private properties acquired for public purposes, such as road construction, utility easements, wetlands, and other public infrastructure. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

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GOLDEN EAGLE GRADUATES

Somia Tenorio Quan graduated from Boston College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance & Marketing last May 19. Quan is the daughter of Priscilla T. Tenorio, president of Joeten Ace Hardware. Joeten family members were present for the graduation. Standing left, Joe Guzman, Priscilla T. Tenorio, Somia T. Quan, Mike T. Demapan, and Jose T. Quan. Kneeling from left, Sherry P. Tenorio, Roman "Bo" T. Palacios, and Frannie T. Demapan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Penalty eyed for early withdrawal of pension

A senator wants government employees to pay a 10 percent penalty for withdrawing their pension contributions early.

Senate President Pete P. Reyes has introduced a bill allowing the NMI Retirement Fund to charge an early withdrawal penalty of 10 percent of a member's contributions, excluding interest earned.

The bill would also authorize the Fund to apply from the refund any amounts owed by the member to the pension agency.

The Fund has reported a rash of refund requests after the previous Legislature enacted a law extending the early withdrawal option to employees with 15 years of government service. Previously, only employees with 10 years of service were able to withdraw their contributions.

According to Fund administrator Mark Aguon, since the law was enacted last year, contribution withdrawals had averaged $500,000 a month.

This is seen to result in a mixture of advantages and disadvantages for the Fund.

Aguon said it likely to benefit the pension program in the long term. The more people taking out their contributions, the fewer future retirees will there be. That means the pension agency will have less liability to fund.

But more withdrawals also mean the retirement program will have to dispense more money than it does normally. Since no government contributions are going into the Fund, the short-term impact can be damaging to the pension plan.

As of March 2008, the Fund had $440 million in assets. This year, the Fund is expected to liquidate $45 million in assets to pay benefits and administrative costs. If drawdowns continue at this rate and the government continues to fail to remit any money to the Fund, the pension program will be bankrupt in fewer than 10 years. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ensign Christine Dela Cruz Torres is joined by her parents Tony and Connie Torres, her sister Ana Maria Gov. Benigno Fitial, Ed Pangelinan and Bo Palacios of the Office of the Resident Representative, friends, and family members in New London, Connecticut to attend her graduation.

Christine Torres graduates from USCG Academy

NEW LONDON, Connecticut—Representing the beautiful islands of the Northern Mariana Islands, Christine Dela Cruz Torres from Saipan, graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy on Wednesday, May 21, and was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Coast Guard. Torres has the remarkable distinction and honor of being the first Northern Marianas resident to graduate from the Coast Guard Academy.

The Coast Guard Academy is the smallest of the five U.S. service academies. It offers elite higher education, rigorous professional development, and the honor and traditions of a military academy but with a more personalized approach. Vice President Dick Cheney delivered the commencement address to the graduates.

Torres, the eldest daughter of Antonio Tudela and Consolacion Dela Cruz Torres of Capital Hill, Saipan, graduated with honors from Mount Carmel High School in 2002 and was active in various community services and higher school activities. While in high school, she participated in the Junior Statesmen of America Summer School Programs at Northwestern, Georgetown and Stanford Universities. She also served as Vice Speaker of the 4th CNMI Youth Congress.

She graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Basic Training at Cape May, New Jersey, in September 2002; served as an engineer on the USCGC MELLON in Seattle, Washington; and attended the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island before entering the Coast Guard Academy in June 2004.

Among the many friends and family members from the CNMI and the U.S. mainland who made the long journey to New London, Connecticut to attend her graduation were her parents Tony and Connie Torres, her sister Ana Maria and Gov. Benigno Fitial. Ed Pangelinan and Bo Palacios of the Office of the Resident Representative also attended on behalf of Resident Representative Pedro A. Tenorio.

"Everyone in the CNMI is proud of your academic achievements and in particular for being the first resident of the CNMI to excel in one of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Additionally, in becoming an officer of the United States military, you are serving as an exceptional role model for all our young people in the CNMI by pursuing a career in the service of our great Nation and to be a future leader of America," said Tenorio.

When pressed for words of encouragements to share with the CNMI's youth, Torres said: "Don't be afraid to continue learning. Don't stop after high school. Further your education and bring back what you've learned to the CNMI, so we can help each other prosper and move our people forward. If you have a goal or dream and you truly want it, don't stop until you accomplish what you set out to do. Finish what you start. Never expect anything to be handed to you on a silver platter. Work hard and do your best in every aspect of your life, and success will come on its own." ***(PR)***

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PAWS dog show is back on schedule

The much anticipated, twice postponed, PAWS and Beautify CNMI! annual dog show is scheduled for June 7, 2008, from 4pm to 6pm.at the CPA Airport Field. The exact location of the show will be at the southern end of the field underneath the Flame Trees.

The dog show was originally scheduled for May 17, 2008, but was postponed when PAWS president Katie Busenkell was invited to attend the United States Humane Society's Animal Care Expo, a convention on animal care and welfare. "It was an opportunity for networking that we could not pass up," said Busenkell.

Everyone is invited to attend and participate in the dog show, which is a free event. It is a fun activity for the entire family, including boonie dogs. All dogs entered in the show, or present at the show, must wear a collar and have a leash.

"If your dog has mange, a condition that causes the dog to loose hair, we ask that you not enroll your pet in the show," said PAWS vice president Melissa Simms. "Instead, we urge you to take your pet to a veterinarian for treatment."

For those dogs that are able to attend the show, owners may enter their dog(s) to win prizes in the following categories: (1) The Fattest; (2) The Most Disobedient; (3) The Best Belly Dragger (for smaller breeds); (4) The Best Geriatric (for those older dogs); (5) The Most Like a Movie Star; and (6) The Booniest. A prize will also be awarded to the dog that wins the title, "The Best of the Worst," otherwise known as the best of show.

Prizes include Frontline for fleas and ticks, flea and tick shampoo and dip, dog toys, dog food, and a dog bed, just to name a few of the items that have been generously donated by Costco and/or purchased with funds donated by Beautify CNMI!, Angil Designs, Inc., and the Pew Charitable Trust.

"And, if you have a cat, or many, you are invited to enter our $1 raffle for cat-care items," said Simms.

Registration is free and pre-registration is strongly encouraged due to an expected high turnout. When asked if she was excited about the dog show, Bernie Dela Cruz said, "Yes! Because I love dogs. I love animals."

Forms can be downloaded at www.paws-saipan.org and emailed to Katie at busenkell@gmail.com. If you have questions about the dog show, call the PAWS PTI hotline for more information at 285-PAWS. ***(PR)***

Community gives big to Project Proa

HAGATNA, Guam—The Tourism Education Council's 3rd Annual Wine and Food Tasting event held recently at the Westin Hotel raised $25,000 from businesses and individuals throughout the community.

"This is $10,000 more than last year's event," said Development chair Brian Artero. "We are very pleased and thankful that the business community stepped up in a big way to support this event and this project".

Part of the proceeds from the one night event will go toward "Project Proa," a Guam-based "sense of place" initiative started by the TEC over a year ago.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Carvers/builders pictured from left to right: Jose Munoz, Rob Limtiaco, Raymond Joseph Flores, Dewaitil Houkol, Joshua Mallon, Yper Kauka, and Senior Master Canoe Builder and Navigator Raymond Edward.

"The Proa is only one piece of the many parts that make up sense of place," said project chair Jose Munoz. "This will be the first of several initiatives started by TEC to underscore the importance of sense of place in our community".

The Proa is almost complete, and the committee expects to launch the canoe sometime in August. Look for details about the launch soon.

For more information on Project Proa or to learn more about volunteer opportunities available, visit www.project-proa.com. ***(PR)***

Defense chief assures Guam residents

From Page 1

Gates assured local officials the Pentagon will be "sensitive to the needs of the people of Guam" as 7,000 Marines are transferred from Okinawa to the island within the next six years at an estimated cost of $10.2 billion (€6.58 billion).

The Finegayan area that stretches for miles (kilometers) along Guam's Route 3 has been identified by military planners as the preferred site for a planned Marine base. Gates said he is confident that the goal of relocating the Marines to Guam by 2014 will be met.

Construction projects related to the Marines' relocation are expected to start about two years from now, but other military projects already are under way.

For the current fiscal year, which ends June 30, the Pentagon has budgeted $228 million (€147 million) for Guam military construction, including projects for the Air Force, Army, National Guard and construction of schools for children of military families.

At Andersen Air Force Base, up to $2 billion (€1.29 billion) worth of projects are expected to be carried out within the next few years, said Brig. Gen. Doug Owens, the base's commander.

"Andersen six years from now will not look anything like this," Owens said, adding that military growth on the island over the next several years will be unprecedented.

He said Guam's strategic location is suited for immediate deployment of U.S. military forces to anywhere in the Asia Pacific region. Planes from Guam can reach any place in East Asia within a few hours.

Mudslides in the Philippines, the recent storm devastation in Myanmar, the China earthquake and other U.S. humanitarian missions involved personnel from Andersen among the first U.S. responders, he said.

A $42 million (€27.08 million) facility for the unmanned Global Hawa surveillance aircraft is under construction at Andersen. It's expected to be completed in a year, with aircraft arriving around July 2009, Owens said.

Owens said the base is also being readied to accomodate the Air Force's next generation of fighter jets.

Andersen will see its Air Force personnel grow from 8,000 now to about 9,000 in the next several years, he said.

When Gates arrived on Guam Thursday afternoon, Gov. Felix Camacho asked him to support Guam's request for U.S. financial support for infrastructure improvements and other expenses related to hosting a massive increase in troops.

The local government has put a price tag of $2 billion (€1.29 billion) to $3 billion (€1.93 billion) in civilian projects to accommodate the buildup.

New flights seen to boost local tourism

From Page 1

"This is not the best time for tourism on Saipan," Nakauchi told Nick K. Nishikawa, the incoming general manager of Hyatt Regency Saipan, "but you're lucky. In July, there will be two daily flights coming from Tokyo."

The new night flight is projected to bring in approximately 60,000 seats a year—about 30 percent of total Japan arrivals last year.

Nishikawa, who is swapping posts with outgoing GM Michael von Siebenthal, indicated his readiness for the challenge. He sought the help of the hotel staff and the community in improving the hotel, as well as in promoting Saipan as tourist destination.

"We need your continuous support," said Nishikawa.

A party was held at the Hyatt gardens on Friday evening to pay tribute to von Siebenthal and to welcome Nishikawa. (See more photos in tomorrow's issue of the *Saipan Tribune*.)

Von Siebenthal recalled that the local tourism industry was also going through tough times when he came to head the Hyatt Regency Saipan nearly seven years ago. At that time, the 9/11 attacks had just occurred, followed by the SARS scare.

But the hotel survived, even managing to expand with the opening of a new spa and the construction of a new $6.5-million staff housing.

Von Siebenthal is now heading to Fukuoka, Japan to manage the Grand Hyatt Hotel there. He will take over from Nishikawa, who has been with the hotel for 12 years.

"Leaving is always tough," von Siebenthal told the crowd of government officials, business leaders, tourism industry players, and dignitaries that attended the party.

"The longer you stay and the smaller the place is, the stronger the bonds you create. To some people, this gathering may look like an opportunity to meet business contacts. But when I look out here, all I see is friends," he added.

Von Siebenthal, who had been actively involved in the community during his stay on Saipan, was presented plaques and certificates of recognition by the Marianas Visitors Authority, Make-A-Wish Foundation, the 16th House of Representatives, and the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Indiana boy goes home as country's top speller

From Page 1

The 13-year-old from West Lafayette, Ind., who often had the audience laughing with his one-line commentaries was all business when he aced "guerdon"—a word that appropriately means "something that one has earned or gained"—to win the 81st version of the bee Friday night.

"I don't know about comedy lines, but my parents have been telling me since the beginning that I should always stay calm, cool and collected," said Sameer, who likes playing the violin and video games, and hopes one day to be a neurosurgeon.

Sameer, appearing in the bee for the fourth time and a top 20 finisher the last two years, clenched both fists and put his hands to his face after spelling the winning word. He won a tense duel over first-time participant Sidharth Chand, 12, of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., who finally stumbled on "prosopopoeia," a word describing a type of figure of speech.

Sameer was a crowd favorite throughout the tournament. When told one of his words in the semifinals was a dessert, he deadpanned: "That sounds good right now." He rolled his eyes and muttered "wonderful" when told that one of his words had five different language roots. He once asked "Are you sure there are no alternate pronunciations?" and later uttered "That's a relief" after initially mishearing the word "numnah" (a type of sheepskin pad).

And what did he have to say while hoisting the heavy trophy? "I'm really, really weak."

Sameer is coached by his sister, Shruti, a high school senior and three-time spelling bee competitor. The first-place finish won him $35,000 in cash and more than $5,000 in other prizes.

Third place went to Tia Thomas, 13, from Coarsegold, Calif., who was eliminated on "opificer" (a skilled or artistic worker). She started the word with an "e" instead of an "o" and received a standing ovation and a hug from her mother. Tia was one of the favorites, appearing in her fifth and final bee after an eighth-place finish a year ago.

The finals were aired live in prime time on ABC, and it appeared for a while that the broadcast could run late into the night. Twenty-four of the first 25 words were spelled correctly, with the dictionary-familiar competitors breezing through words such as "brankursine," "cryptarithm," and "empyrean" with barely a hitch.

Rose Sloan was so familiar with "alcarraza" (a type of jug) that the 13-year-old from River Forest, Ill., couldn't stop laughing in glee when pronouncer Jacques Bailly uttered it. She was later eliminated on "sheitel" (a wig worn by Jewish women).

Austin Pineda, 14, of Perris, Calif., was the only early casualty, putting an extra "l" in "tralatitious" (handed down) as he nervously twirled his bangs with his index finger.

It was somewhat surprising who didn't make the finals. There were no Canadians—and no Matthew Evans.

Matthew, also a favorite to win in his fifth and final appearance, was stunningly eliminated during the semifinal round Friday when he misspelled "secernent," a word dealing with secretion and one that somehow eluded him as he studied his personal 30,000-word list. He ended it with "-ant."

When the 13-year-old from Albuquerque, N.M., heard the bell, he slumped his shoulders, lowered his head and slowly walked offstage, a rare standing ovation echoing behind him. He stayed in the comfort room for more than a half-hour, and his eyes were still red when he emerged.

"It's disappointing," said Matthew, choking back tears. "I know a lot of people were rooting for me."

All seven representatives from Canada were vanquished in a span of about 20-minutes in the first semifinal round. No Canadian has ever won the bee, but the country always fields a strong contingent. Nate Gartke of Alberta was last year's runner-up.

"Seven up, seven down," said Pam Penny of Ancaster, Ontario, whose daughter, 10-year-old Veronica, was eliminated on the French-rooted word "etagere." "Very disappointing. Especially for Canadians to go down on French words."

Among the spectators was 94-year-old Frank Neuhauser, the winner of the first national bee in 1925. Asked to spell his winning word from 83 years ago, Neuhauser rattled off the letters to "gladiolus" as if he were racing through his ABCs.

"It's an easy word," said Neuhauser, who attracted a long line of teen and preteen autograph-seekers. "Nobody could miss it, but the second (-place) girl did."

Neuhauser's prize was $500 in $20 gold pieces. He also was feted with a parade through his hometown of Louisville, Ky.

"It was a lot easier back then," Neuhauser told the audience. "There were only eight competitors instead of 288. I'd never make it now."

The 288 spellers that entered this year's bee was a record. Forty-five of them made it past the preliminary and quarterfinal rounds Thursday to compete on Friday.

DARE graduates over 350 students

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

More than 350 students graduated Friday from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program at Hopwood Junior High School.

The graduates each received certificates of accomplishment from the Department of Public Safety.

According to DARE instructor and police officer Isa Bokuku, the students learned how to keep away from prohibited drugs, gain better self-esteem, and become the best citizens the CNMI could ever have.

These, she said, are just some of the objectives of the DARE program.

DPS Commissioner Clyde Norita, who provided brief remarks, Education Commissioner David M. Borja, DARE board president Jonas M. Barcinas, and the DPS-DARE team attended the commencement exercises.

The DARE session lasted eight weeks at 45 minutes for each class.

The top 10 students who were recognized in Friday's ceremony were Emelyn R. Feria, Rolando Sangalang, John Tenorio, Raynalynn Sablan, Glorily Williams, Shawn Seman, Jon Cenir, Kelly Demapan, Shannon Lely, and Elizabeth Phan.

All in all, "the students did very well. They learned a whole lot and have each promised to reinforce what they've learned into their lives," said Bokuku.

She said many of the students shared their personal experiences at home and family members abusing illegal drugs.

"These kids have learned how to trust us and open up to us. We want them to know that we're here to help them," Bokuku said.

DPS started the program in 1995 but has been conducting the program at Hopwood only. Bokuku said that Hopwood's high student population, along with its ability to provide logistical requirements for the DARE program, makes the school one of the ideal places to host the program.

Police officer Joe Saures, who also attended Friday's event, said there should be a follow-up training on the new graduates because if there were none, values imparted to them would not be reinforced.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Drug Abuse Resistance Education program's top 10 graduates from Hopwood Junior High School join Education Commissioner Dr. David Borja, DARE board president and Dandan Elementary School principal Jonas Barcinas, DARE instructor Isa Bokuku, HJHS principal Christine Masga, Officer-In-Charge Joe Saures, and teachers during Friday's D.A.R.E graduation ceremony at the HJHS campus.

Assessment for seawall project now available for public review

American Memorial Park Superintendent Sarah Creachbaum announced Friday the availability of the recently prepared "Environmental Assessment for Replacement of the Seawall at Smiling Cove Marina, Garapan, Saipan" at the American Memorial Park.

The document, which describes and examines the impacts of the proposed project, will be on public review until June 23.

"We invite your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act process and solicit your comments concerning the proposal and any potential environmental issues of concern to you," the park said in a statement.

Currently, the sheet pile wall, constructed over 40 years ago, is badly corroded and failing, causing safety concerns. Under the preferred alternative, a new sheet pile wall would replace the existing deteriorated sheet pile wall and 70 linear feet of the concrete woven mattress just south of the end of the sheet wall would be replaced with a riprap rock slope. There would be backfilling and grading to below the mean higher high water. The causeway surface would be graded to the top of the sheet pile wall and capped with a walkway and handrail.

A full description of the construction activities associated with the preferred alternative is described in the environmental assessment that analyzes the preferred alternative and other alternatives and their potential impacts on the environment.

Potential reviewers may obtain a copy of the document from the park visitor center or by calling Park Ranger Nancy Kelchner at 671-234-7607, or by emailing sarah_creachbaum@nps.gov.

Reviewers may send comments to:

Ron Shields, Project Manager
National Park Service, Denver Service Center
P.O. Box 25287
12795 West Alameda Parkway
Denver, CO 80225
(303) 969-2164

Reviewers may also post comments online at the National Park Service planning page at: http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ within the 30-day public review period. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Joshua Dela Cruz, left, and Jason Arriola spent three months at MVA as interns.

MVA interns learn about tourism industry

At the Marianas Visitors Authority, educating future job seekers in the CNMI about tourism and its importance to the economy is a key initiative. MVA recently had two interns in their offices learning about the many facets that tourism covers.

Joshua Dela Cruz and Jason Arriola spent three months at MVA. They were exposed to all that MVA does to promote the islands as a destination. They spent time doing site inspections and learning more about the history and importance of the tourist sites on Saipan as well as how important it is to assure that the sites are preserved. They also learned about how MVA works internally. Spending time in accounting, research and marketing gave them a well rounded view of the organization. Gaining first hand experience and working with the various departments and staff at MVA is beneficial to the future of tourism.

"I would like to thank the staff of MVA for all they taught me," said Dela Cruz. "This was a very rewarding experience for me. I learned a lot about how important the visitor market is to the economy of Saipan."

"This experience helped me realize the importance of tourism on our islands," said Arriola. "I always knew that tourism was a good thing for our economy, but I never understood the whole concept of how it directly helps us. However, having the chance to work at MVA made me notice the reason why we depend so much on tourism. Not only do tourists come over for relaxation, but their presence helps our economy generate revenue which allows the CNMI to function."

"Internships are an integral part of our outreach program. We encourage our youth to learn more about MVA and our visitors industry as a whole," said MVA rersonnel manager Polly Deleon Guerrero. "As we say around here—tourism is everybody's business—especially when it comes to our youth." ***(MVA)***

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

A big problem solved?

Rejoice in the new report from the National Center for Health Statistics that suggests that childhood obesity rates may have plateaued. But rejoice for only a moment. As David Ludwig of Children's Hospital Boston wrote in a commentary released with the report, "We're not out of the woods by any stretch. Even if the rates don't go up any more, they are so high that the full impact of the childhood obesity epidemic will continue for the next few decades."

It's an epidemic that has been more than two decades in the making. Through a combination of factors, which resulted in reduced physical activity and increased consumption of fat-laden snacks and meals, the waistlines of American children have ballooned. And the health consequences have been significant. Ailments that historically have plagued only adults are showing up in children ranging in age from 6 to 17. Gallbladder disease, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease are just a few of the health complications they face.

Given such grim prospects, it's only natural to want to celebrate the news from the study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association this week. Using data collected from two surveys of 8,165 children and adolescents (ages 2 to 19) in 2003-04 and 2004-05, the scientists saw no statistically significant change in obesity. Making the good news better was the discovery by researchers that there was no significant increase in weight when they compared those data with measurements from as far back as 1999. And this trend was seen across the board, in terms of race, ethnicity and gender.

Individual efforts being made around the United States to combat childhood obesity may be having an impact. Parents, schools, local and state governments, the food industry and others see this epidemic for the medical emergency it is. A 2005 special report in the New England Journal of Medicine warned, "Unless effective population-level interventions to reduce obesity are developed, the steady rise in life expectancy observed in the modern era may soon come to an end and the youth of today may, on average, live less healthy and possibly even shorter lives than their parents." That sad prospect remains.

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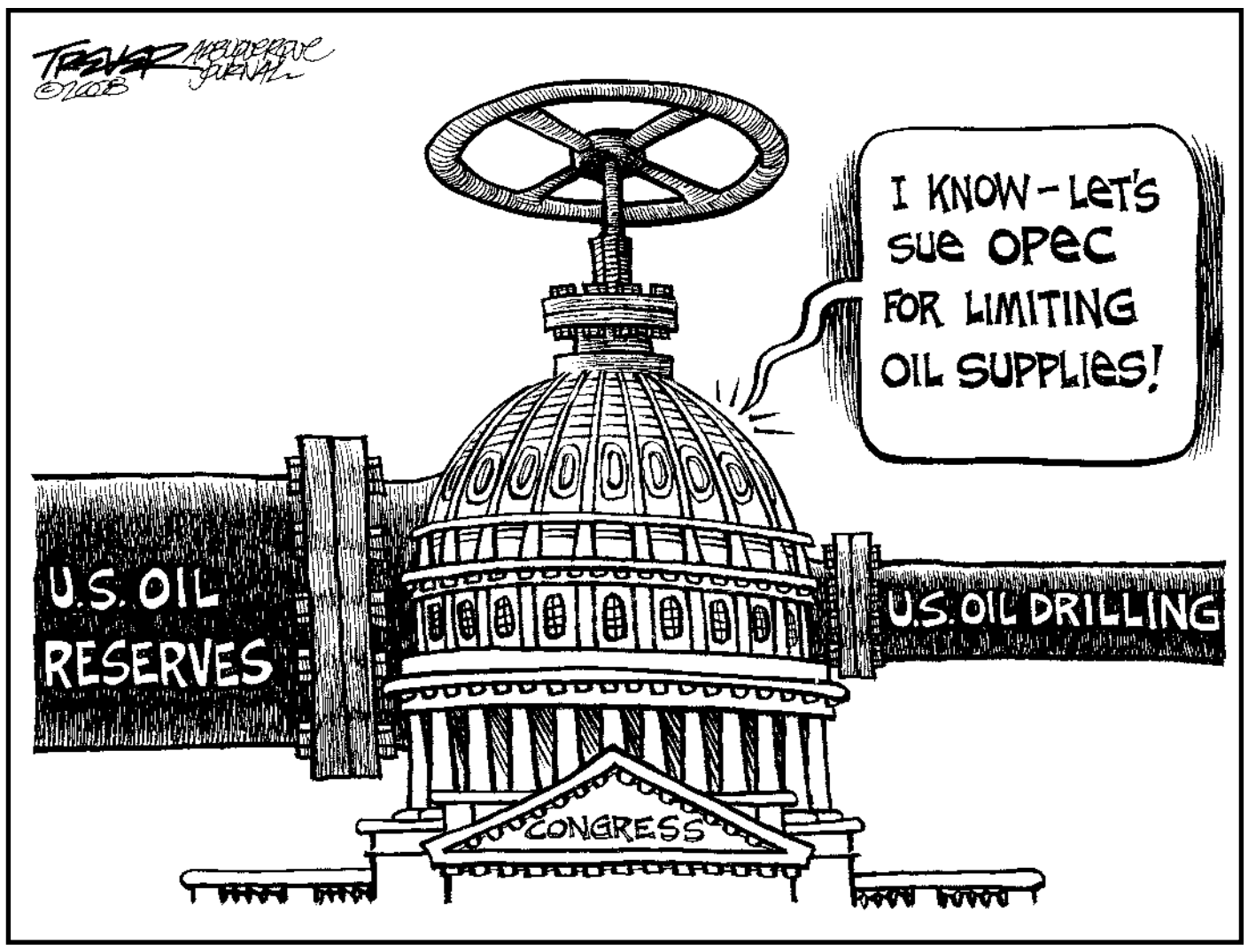
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I KNOW - LET'S SUE OPEC FOR LIMITING OIL SUPPLIES!
U.S. OIL RESERVES
U.S. OIL DRILLING
CONGRESS

French smoking ban going down in flames

By STEPHEN CLARKE
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

I'm walking through St.-Germain-des-Pres enjoying the sights and sounds of springtime in Paris. The men are ogling women's uncovered legs, the city's new public bikes are swishing along the sidewalk knocking pedestrians into the gutter, and the cafes are full of chattering smokers.

Smokers? But wait a minute, wasn't smoking in cafes and restaurants outlawed in France on Jan. 1?

Yes, there's a big sign on the door of one cafe informing its customers of the 68-euro fine for lighting up. There's even a huge pictograph of a crossed-out cigarette for Parisians too rushed to read. But the air is thick with the blue smoke of a dozen cigarettes as people enjoy their morning coffee with a side order of nicotine.

Typical, you might think, this blatant French disregard for the law. But you'd be wrong, because they're managing to smoke in a cafe while obeying an anti-smoking law.

Welcome to France.

As of the first day of 2008, any cafe or restaurant that wants to allow people to smoke on its premises has been obliged to install a fumoir, or smoking room. However, the specifications for the fumoir's thick walls, automatic closing doors and air extractors are so draconian that no one has bothered. In fact, they don't need to because it is perfectly legal to smoke on the terrace of a cafe or restaurant. And a terrace is defined as a place outside the premises that is not enclosed by solid walls and a fixed ceiling.

Suddenly, cafes that used to plonk a few tables on the sidewalk have created " terraces. " It's been a great few months to be an awning salesman.

For most of the winter, Parisian smokers huddled in these thin-walled, canvas-roofed spaces and filled them with as much smoke as ever. You can almost feel French politicians shrugging—we have imposed this law, what else do you want us to do?

No-smoking areas used to be a sham—three or four tables in a corner close to the bar where everyone including the barman stood and smoked all day. I once asked if a restaurant had a nonsmoking area and was told by the waiter, " Not specifically—it's mixed." He wasn't joking.

Now, though, things have changed, and people have been flocking to eat in places where they wouldn't have dared venture before. Bar owners quoted in the media express astonishment that mothers dare to come in with their children.

There have, however, been some less positive developments. One has been dubbed the cafe basket, or "sneaker coffee." Someone goes up to the bar, orders a drink, consumes most of it and then says he's just nipping outside for a quick cigarette. At which time, he runs off without paying. Bar owners are getting wise to this and are checking out the footwear of their customers. Sneaker-loving American tourists should not be surprised if they are eyed with more than usual suspicion in French cafes.

The second negative effect of the anti-smoking law is far more worrying, especially now that summer is coming.

Although smokers may have found refuge on the terraces, they're not particularly happy to be there. In the past, many of them used to prop up the bar, playing the lottery, eyeing the barmaid. But French cafes usually apply three price scales—for the bar, the salle (main room) and the terrace, where drinks are at their most expensive, no doubt to compensate the waiter for having to walk so far to take orders.

So now the cafe terraces are full of smokers who are very angry at being overcharged and want to make full use of their costly terrace time. They puff nonstop, not only between courses but often while they're actually eating.

Before the new law was introduced, it was possible, as a nonsmoker, to lean across to the next table and say something like, "Excuse me, I respect your right to smoke, and I have nothing against *le tabac*—some of my best friends are in rehab for nicotine addiction—but I would appreciate it if you could hold your burning cigarette a few centimeters farther from my plate so that I can taste this rather expensive meal I've ordered. Oh, and merci beaucoup in advance for your humanitarianism."

In 50 percent of cases, this used to work. These days, forget it. You'll only provoke a tirade about how smokers are being bankrupted, not only by the collapse of the world banking system and the rise in oil (and therefore tar) prices but by the sudden doubling of their drink prices. Your meal will get cold long before the rant ends.

It's a tragic irony—the sun is out, the canvas roofs of the French cafe terraces are off, and just when you want to sit by the sidewalk for some fresh air and people watching, you need a gas mask.

And there's one final French twist to the story.

The anti-smoking rule is not actually a law. It's a decree, meaning that instead of being passed by Parliament, it was simply a regulation imposed by the government.

So, come the next election, if President Nicolas Sarkozy wants to make a populist move, he can repeal the decree. The hard-line smokers will trudge—slowly, because of their impaired lung capacity—to the polling stations, and he will win a second term.

Given his low approval ratings, he might do it. So those of you who just went on line to buy shares in French awning manufacturers and outdoor-heater companies, put a note in your diary to sell before election day in May 2012. You can then reinvest in *le tabac*, of course.

Clarke is a British writer living in Paris. His new novel is Merde Happens.

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McCain's rhetoric on vets isn't matched by his votes

By EDWARD HUMES
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Edward Humes is the author of Over Here: How the GI Bill Transformed the American Dream *and, most recently,* Monkey Girl.

More than a few people have been puzzled by U.S. Sen. John McCain's dogged opposition to the updated GI Bill of Rights now before Congress. The dissonance between McCain's military-man image and his actions on this issue have introduced a jarring note to his presidential aspirations—and have highlighted the shoddy treatment many Iraq war veterans have received.

Why would a Vietnam War veteran and former prisoner of war, a man who is personally acquainted with the difficulties vets can face in returning to civilian life, join President Bush in opposing a popular bipartisan bill to support the troops? Isn't fixing the education benefit in the bill—one that has shortchanged far too many veterans for years—a political no-brainer in an election year? The 75 senators who recently voted for it certainly thought so. Over the Memorial Day weekend, Sen. Barack Obama expressed some well-timed astonishment at McCain's opposition, and the two have been feuding about it since. The media and pundits seem perplexed, collectively suggesting: That's not the John McCain we know.

Which is true: It is the John McCain they don't know. If the media weren't so mesmerized by the McCain image they have long promoted and instead got to know the McCain record, they would realize that there is nothing surprising or inconsistent about his position on the GI Bill. For years he has opposed legislation that veterans and their advocates deem vital. In doing so, he is simply being true to the contemporary conservative wing of the GOP and its leader, George W. Bush, in opposing social programs and benefits for individuals, even if those individuals happen to be veterans. The only surprise is that anyone finds this surprising. This time, though, McCain is swimming against the tide of history. The original GI Bill—signed into law in 1944—was one of the most important laws ever adopted by Congress. It transformed the nation after World War II in epic fashion, with generous college benefits, stipends, subsidized mortgages, business loans and job training and placement.

Veterans got free rides to any college that would accept them. Tuition, books, housing and living expenses were all covered, giving rise to a new generation of scientists, inventors, teachers, doctors, civic leaders and artists. Low-interest, no-money-down home loans backed by the government made it less expensive to buy than to rent. Suburbia, widespread homeownership, college as a majority aspiration, the middle class—all were built on the back of the GI Bill. It reinvented the American dream. Former U.S. senators and presidential candidates Bob Dole and George McGovern went to school on the GI Bill. So did Clint Eastwood and Paul Newman. So did 14 Nobel Prize winners. So did 7 million other World War II veterans.

Today's GI Bill, however, is a pale shadow of the original, particularly when it comes to college, as Congress has not kept the benefits in line with the rising cost of higher education. The World War II-era living stipend is gone; in its place, members of the military must agree to a $100 monthly payroll deduction to receive the college aid. An education benefit that sent WWII vets to Yale now won't cover four years at the average public university, although many recruits don't understand this when they sign up.

Sen. James Webb, D-Va., a former Marine who served in Vietnam and who was President Reagan's Navy secretary, has made restoring the GI Bill education benefits one of his signature issues; it was his bill, co-sponsored by Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., that cleared the Senate over McCain's and Bush's opposition.

McCain contends that making the education benefits too generous will hurt retention, as enlistees will leave for college after three years rather than re-enlist. McCain's position makes sense only by overlooking the fact that the main retention (and recruiting) problems facing the military are the Iraq war and the scandals plaguing military and veterans' health care. (The most recent outrage: In a Memorial Day speech, Secretary of Veterans Affairs James Peake played down the seriousness of brain trauma suffered by tens of thousands of servicemen in Iraq and Afghanistan, calling many of their diagnoses "overblown" and likening them to youth football injuries.)

The inadequacy of the military's prime recruiting tool—subsidized college educations—is hurting recruitment too, and Webb claims this can be fixed only by fixing the GI Bill. He says McCain, a friend, "is missing the boat" by siding with the Bush Pentagon rather than veterans groups. Webb points to a Congressional Budget Office analysis that found any possible losses in retention caused by his bill would be balanced by the increases in recruitment it would generate.

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McCain's rationalization for opposing the bill may not hold water, but his stance makes perfect sense in light of his record. From 2004 to 2006, the Disabled Veterans of America gave him annual scores ranging from 50 percent to the most recent 20 percent when it comes to supporting the group's legislative priorities. The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America gave him a grade of "D" in its most recent analysis of voting records. The American Legion says he is dead wrong on the GI Bill, as does the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

When Obama (who has averaged an 86 percent rating from the Disabled Veterans of America) criticized McCain on the GI Bill, the Arizona senator angrily suggested that Obama's status as a nonveteran rendered his opinions on military matters worthless (an odd stance, as this standard would also discount the opinions of 85 percent of American men, 98.8 percent of American women and two-thirds of Congress). Then he invited a look at his own record by asserting, "I take a back seat to no one in my affection, respect and devotion to veterans."

So let's take McCain up on his invitation. Here is how he has stood on recent legislation supported by major veterans organizations:

- On Webb's GI Bill, he expressed opposition, and he was AWOL when it was time to vote on May 22.
- In September, he voted against another Webb bill that would have mandated adequate rest for troops between combat deployments.
- On a badly needed $1.5-billion increase for veterans medical services for fiscal year 2007—to be funded through closing corporate tax loopholes—he voted no. He also voted against establishing a trust fund to bolster under-budgeted veterans hospitals.
- In May 2006, he voted against a $20-billion allotment for expanding swamped veterans medical facilities.
- In April 2006, he was one of 13 Senate Republicans who voted against an amendment to provide $430 million for veterans outpatient care.
- In March 2004, he voted against and helped defeat on a party-line vote a $1.8-billion reserve for veterans medical care, also funded by closing tax loopholes.

Before the Senate voted on Webb's GI legislation, McCain offered what he called a compromise bill, but it was rejected. Webb pointed out that there really was no compromise in McCain's proposal because it would have excluded most veterans by offering full education benefits only to those with multiple enlistments, even though 70 percent to 75 percent of enlistees leave after one tour.

Compare McCain's stingy standards with the original GI Bill: Any veteran who served 90 days during World War II, in combat or not, earned full benefits. It is Webb's bill that represents the reasonable compromise between the gold standard set for the "greatest generation's" original GI benefits and what is doable in today's economy: a GI Bill that will truly pay for a college education after three years of service, without the onerous payroll deduction.

So here is where the McCain image and reality part company. It is certainly true that his affectionate and respectful rhetoric for America's servicemen and women takes a back seat to no one. But when it comes to improving the health and education of our veterans, McCain's record leaves them stranded by the side of the road.

Summer, melting away already

By HANK STUEVER
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It's never too soon to regret the summer we didn't have. Those pangs start now, on Memorial Day, as summer already slips away, like losing your favorite sunglasses again, and wearing a new pair that never feels right, that you regret buying. Let's not wait and do this in the last week of August, let's regret summer now: All the nights we meant to eat outside, until we saw how long the wait was for a table. All our dirty furniture on the deck, which is really only a balcony, which we regret.

Teddy Kennedy has cancer in his brain and he's already been sailing once since he got home from the hospital, probably more. We regret that it's another summer and we still (still) somehow don't know people who own boats or summer houses by the sea. (Some of us, on the other hand, regret knowing these people. It sounds so much better in theory, until the day such people take you out on their boat and it turns out to be more work than your weekday job: Lift this, tie this, hold this. Everyone push on the count of three, etc. We see boats and see regret.)

Your wedding? We send our warmest regrets.

About the ocean: We regret it. We regret Rehoboth, and beyond—regretting the Hamptons, Nantucket, Provincetown. Hell, let's regret Fiji. We regret that Target has all those cute mix-and-match two-piece bathing suits, but no tops in our size anymore, already gone! And we regret that we never looked into beach houses. There were parties for this sort of thing—where you and your friends were supposed to go and sign up for choice rentals. The party was in February. (So was abs boot camp.) We regret that the three August nights we thought we might like to book a $1,200 luxury cabin at that spa that overlooks the Pacific Ocean at Big Sur are already booked, thank you. (What we really regret? That we didn't have the money anyhow.)

We also regret lakes, and while we're at it, we regret swimmin' holes and cricks, and tubing on the Shenandoah when it's so shallow that you give up, stand up, and wade several yards with your inner tube back to the old school bus that takes you back to the rental shanty, where, regrettably, they listen to Jimmy Buffett all day. We regret missing that Friday night happy-hour MARC train to West Virginia, where people go to their weekend cabins, up there in what's-it-called, you know, the place where they always have such a swell time.

We regret that it's so nice out and we still stayed inside, under the guise that we had to. We regret all the songs that are on the radio this summer, whatever they turn out to be, and we regret how much we listen to the '80s station.

We regret never having had our very own swimming pool. We regret a lot about pools, such as that feeling of wet concrete underfoot, and the smell of Coppertone, and the way the pages of a magazine get while you're reading at a pool. If we are ever in a pool this summer, we regret in advance that we will not glide like accomplished swimmers, and that we still splash around like an 8-year-old.

We regret not having a tan, and we regret the tans we had.

We regret that the marigolds look so droopy in August, and that we didn't plant what we should have already planted. We regret arriving late to the 8 p.m. showing of the big blockbuster movie at the theater, and having to watch it from the second row, straight up.

We regret farmers markets we never go to, even though they are two blocks away, every Saturday morning. We regret that our hair is not long enough and straight enough for a really cute ponytail, to wear with the summer dress we regret not buying on sale at the end of last summer. We regret barbecues we meant to have and did not. We regret that the bottle of Heinz ketchup in the refrigerator has a sell-by date of March 2006, which means it didn't come out at all last summer, and probably won't this summer.

We regret not signing up for vacation days sooner and discovering that there's now an embargo on any more people signing up for the third week of August or the fourth week of July.

Romantic weekend getaways?

Summer lovin'?

Uh, well-uh, well-uh, well-uh—tell me less, tell me less ...

The Weather

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼75°

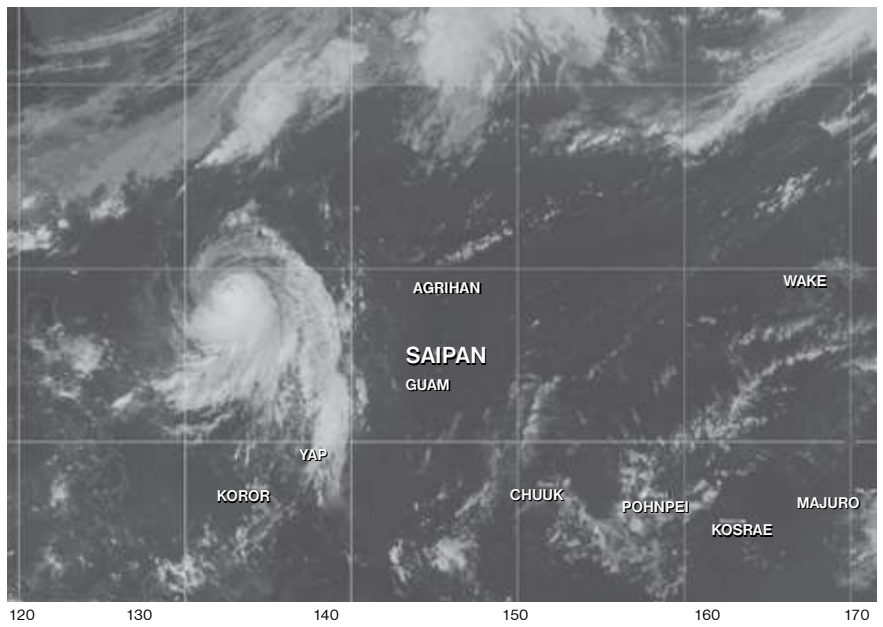
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Cloudy	▲87	▼78
Palau	T'Storms	▲85	▼77
Yap	T'Storms	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼77
Pohnpei	T'Storms	▲86	▼74
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼76
Majuro	T'Storms	▲83	▼72

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲61	▼49
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼64
Hong Kong	T'Storms	▲87	▼77
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼74
London	Showers	▲72	▼57
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲74	▼58
Manila	T'Storms	▲89	▼77
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲66	▼55
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼76
New York	Partly Sunny	▲73	▼58
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼54
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲75	▼60
Pusan	Cloudy	▲72	▼58
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲81	▼62
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼46
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲65	▼51
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲79	▼54
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼56
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲82	▼61

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Typhoon Nakri (06W) is centered near 19N133E or about 720 miles north-northwest of Yap and is moving north-northwest at 5 miles per hour. Maximum sustained winds are 90 miles per hour. Heavy rain and scattered thunderstorms are found within 100 miles of the center. Beyond that, scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring within 125 miles of a line extending from 13N130E to 18N137E and within 75 miles of a line running from 9N139E to 19N140E. For additional details, refer to JTWC Bulletins issued under WMO header WTPN31 PGTW, and National Weather Service Public Advisories issued under WMO header WTPQ31 PGUM. A surface trough arcs northward from EQ163E to 5N160E to 10N163E. Scattered showers are occurring in an area bounded by a line from EQ160E to 3N153E to 9N158E to 7N163E back to EQ160E. This region includes Pohnpei. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 150 miles of a line from 3N171E to 6N180. This area bisects the southern Marshall Islands but lies south of Majuro.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:24AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
11:39AM Today	Low Tide:	-0.2 Feet
6:28PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
11:38PM Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:46AM	6:44PM
Monday	5:46AM	6:44PM
Tuesday	5:46AM	6:45PM
Wednesday	5:46AM	6:45PM
Thursday	5:46AM	6:45PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	2:55AM	3:59PM
Monday	3:44AM	5:04PM
Tuesday	4:40AM	6:13PM
Wednesday	5:42AM	7:22PM
Thursday	6:49AM	8:28PM

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- BUSINESS
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  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:45pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,4,5,7
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	6:40pm	9:25pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:55pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	10:35pm	5:15am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am– 12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday		
	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday		
	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

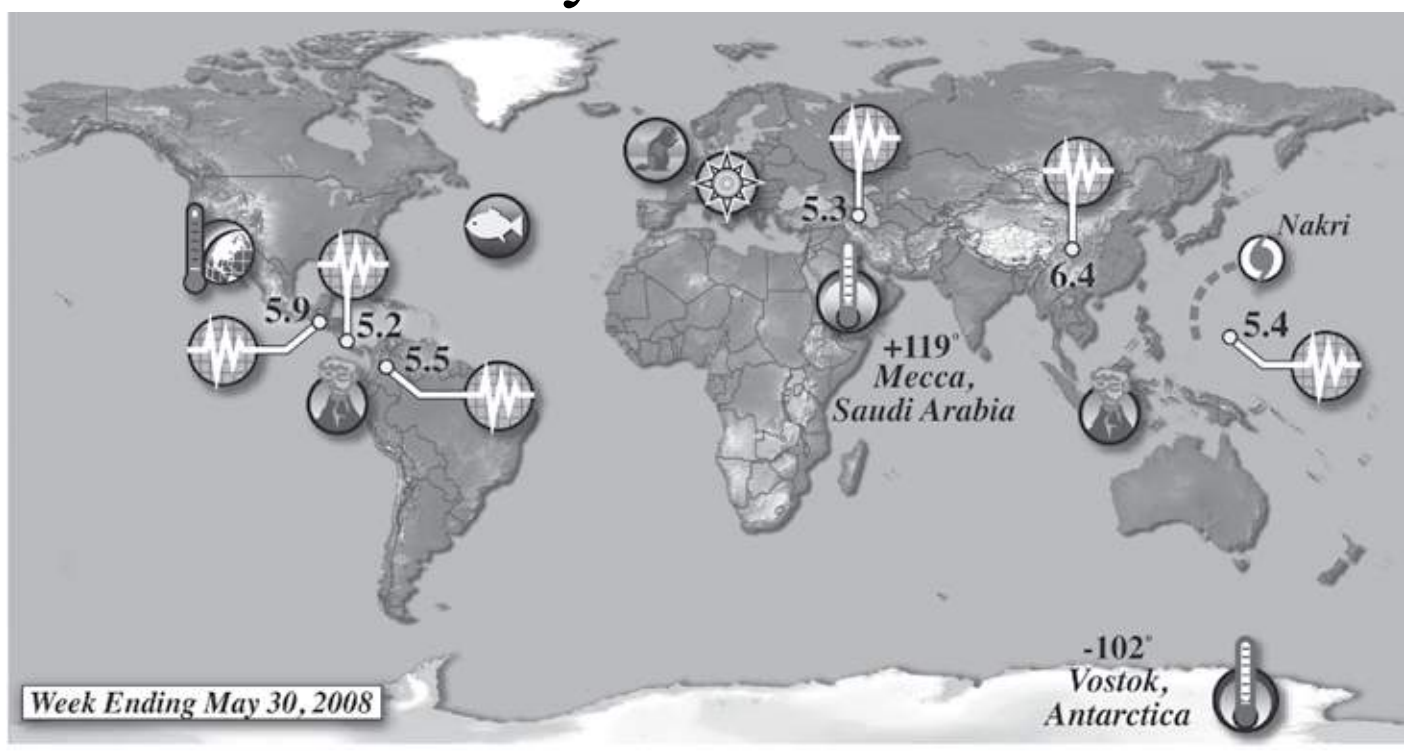
Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Earthweek: A Diary of the Planet

By STEVE NEWMAN



Climate Change Trigger

The Earth may be on the verge of a massive, cascading release of methane similar to one that caused a global warming that ended the last "snowball" ice age, according to a team of California scientists. Writing in the journal Nature, lead researcher Martin Kennedy of UC Riverside suggests the same kind of warming could be about to occur, not over thousands of years, but within a human lifetime. Methane is 25 times more potent as a greenhouse gas as carbon dioxide (CO2), and 10,000 gigatons of frozen methane are currently stored in the world's oceans and permafrost. The current trend of accelerated permafrost melting as the Arctic warms rapidly could release vast amounts of methane into the atmosphere, triggering a sudden climate change. Kennedy worries that rising CO2 levels could drive enough warming to destabilize the Earth's stored methane reserves. "Unzippering the methane reservoir could potentially warm the Earth tens of degrees," Kennedy wrote.

Earthquakes

A powerful aftershock of the May 12 Sichuan, China, temblor killed an additional eight people and injured 917 others across Sichuan and the neighboring provinces of Gansu and Shaanxi. The 6.4 magnitude jolt was the strongest aftershock to rock the region since the initial quake left more than 88,000 people dead or missing.

■ A 5.5 magnitude quake killed at least 14 people and injured 65 others in central Colombia, where the shaking triggered landslides that buried some of the victims in cars.

■ Earth movements were also felt in Panama, Guatemala, northern Iran and Guam.

Toxic Sun Block

Sunscreen lotions used by swimmers around the world are contributing to a phenomenon known as coral bleaching, threatening the coral and the myriad of marine life that depend upon it. A new study sponsored by the European Commission found that even tiny amounts of cream-based UV filters used to protect the skin from the sun's rays caused bleaching of coral reefs. The chemical compounds join climate change, industrial pollution and high UV radiation due to the "ozone hole" as a leading threat to coral reefs. An estimated 4,000 to 6,000 tons of sunscreen are released annually in waters around coral reefs, with 25 percent of the sunscreen ingredients on skin released into water over the course of a 20-minute swim, the report said.

Overfishing Crisis

A leading ocean conservation group says more than 80 percent of the world's fisheries are now at risk from overfishing. A report by Oceana points to studies by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization that found only 17 percent of the world's known fish stocks are underexploited or moderately exploited. Fish in parts of the Atlantic, western Indian Ocean and the northwest Pacific are the most overfished, according to Oceana. The group says the World Trade Organization must act quickly to scrap unsustainable subsidies that encourage exploiting Earth's oceans.

Pacific Typhoon

An area of disturbed weather between Guam and the northern Philippines gradually strengthened into Typhoon Nakri over the open waters of the western Pacific.

Volcanoes

Explosions from within Ecuador's Tungurahua volcano sent ash soaring high above the Andes, but the activity was not considered a threat to those living in the area. Vulcanologists warned people living along nearby riverbanks to be alert for lava flows should the mountain erupt.

■ Clouds of searing heat cascaded down the slopes of Indonesia's Mount Semeru, on the island of Java, prompting officials to warn nearby residents to stay clear of the volcano.

Scot Beavers Return

Beavers will soon be living in the lakes and streams of Scotland for the first time since before Mary, Queen of Scots, was executed in 1587. The beaver was hunted to extinction across Scotland in the 16th century, and the government says it plans to capture about four beaver families in Norway then release them in the lochs of Argyll's Knapdale Wildlife Reserve. When the animals are released next spring, it will mark the first time that native mammals have been reintroduced into the wild anywhere in Britain. Scottish Natural Heritage says it will closely monitor the beavers over the following five years to determine their impact on the local environment and economy before any decision is made on a wider reintroduction. "By bringing these useful creatures back to their native environment, we will have the chance to restore a missing part of our wetland ecosystems and re-establish much-needed natural processes," said Allan Bantick, chairman of the Scottish Beaver Trial Steering Group.

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OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Police hunt for robbers wearing thongs as masks

ARVADA, Colo. (AP)—Police in a Colorado town are searching for two robbers whose masks showed plenty of fashion sense but little modesty: women's thong underwear. A surveillance video released this week by police in Arvada, Colo., shows two unarmed men inside the convenience store. They stole an undisclosed amount of cash and cigarettes in the robbery May 16. One man wore a green thong and the other wore blue. Each thong barely covered the man's nose, mouth and chin and left the rest of his face exposed. One also wore a pink backpack in which he stuffed the stolen items. The suspects also wore T-shirts and pants and were described as in their 20s. One had a left arm tattoo.

Japanese woman caught living in man's closet

TOKYO (AP)—A homeless woman who sneaked into a man's house and lived undetected in his closet for a year was arrested in Japan after he became suspicious when food mysteriously began disappearing. Police found the 58-year-old woman Thursday hiding in the top compartment of the man's closet and arrested her for trespassing, police spokesman Hiroki Itakura from southern Kasuya town said Friday. The resident of the home installed security cameras that transmitted images to his mobile phone after becoming puzzled by food disappearing from his kitchen over the past several months. One of the cameras captured someone moving inside his home Thursday after he had left, and he called police believing it was a burglar. However, when they arrived they found the door locked and all windows closed. "We searched the house ... checking everywhere someone could possibly hide," Itakura said. "When we slid open the shelf closet, there she was, nervously curled up on her side." The woman told police she had no place to live and first sneaked into the man's house about a year ago when he left it unlocked. She had moved a mattress into the small closet space and even took showers, Itakura said, calling the woman "neat and clean."

Good Housekeeping

A screen porch allows that breath of fresh air

By TERRI SAPIENZA
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—One of the first things Mary Henning noticed about her Arlington, Va., house was the tiny bedrooms: three small spaces with three little closets. Not so good. But her reservations disappeared when she stepped through the kitchen and saw the screened porch.

"I walked out onto the porch and thought, 'Oh, my God. I love this house,' " Henning says. "The porch sold me."

To be sure, a screened porch has practical appeal. But another draw is its modest, old-fashioned charm, the jog of a childhood memory that occurs each time the screen door slaps against its frame. For both reasons, homeowners look to these sheltering spaces as the perfect place to while away the days of summer and beyond.

"We live on the porch all summer long and into the fall," Henning says. "We have meals, relax, entertain and sit during rainstorms. ... It reminds me of a summer camp."

THE WASHINGTON POST

Chevy Chase, Md., resident Bonnie Washington's porch replaced an underused deck at the rear of the house.

The popularity of screened porches, say builders and architects, is a function of the environment. "It's just a return to common sense about our climate here in Washington," says Ralph Cunningham, principal of Cunningham Quill Architects. "It's hot, it's humid and there are lots of bugs."

Two years ago, Cunningham's firm designed a porch for Bonnie Washington's house in Chevy Chase, Md. The existing deck sat unused in warm weather because the mosquitoes were so bad. "You'd be out there for five minutes and you'd want to pack it in and go inside," Washington says. Having three young children made things worse. "It's one thing for us to get bitten," she says of herself and her husband, "but it's another when (the kids) get bitten. And they were bitten a lot."

Today, the screened porch is one of the family's favorite living spaces much of the year. It's where the kids like to play games and do arts and crafts, where Mom and Dad like to watch the kids play outside, and where they have meals and entertain. They recently hosted a dinner party on the porch during a rainstorm.

Alexis Gentile Comrack spent her youth on her parents' screened porches, sleeping on them during the summer because the house lacked central air conditioning. But it wasn't nostalgia that prompted the construction of a porch now being added to her Washington home. "Seriously," she says, "it's because of the mosquitoes."

Her husband, Chris Comrack, is building much of the porch himself. He has hired subcontractors to help with the flagstone patio foundation, the copper roof and the gutters; he and his father will do all the framing, screening, painting and trim work.

Experts say homeowners should expect to spend at least $30,000 for a well-built screened porch. Details such as a tongue-and-groove ceiling or recessed lighting cost more. "You're really building an addition," says Tim Burch, president of the local chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry and of Burch Builders Group in Warrenton, Va. "You're just not adding heating and cooling."

In the end, Burch says, clients invariably feel that their porches represent money well spent: "Ten out of ten clients who add them say it's the best thing they've ever done."

John Barrett, owner of Archadeck, a building company in Laytonsville, Md., says screened porches have been "the most significant part of (our) business" in recent years. "It's a very cost-effective way of increasing usable living space."

Chris MacBride and her husband, Neil, added a screened porch to their house in Arlington, Va., in 2004. They were inspired by a porch they'd enjoyed while housesitting as newlyweds 16 years earlier.

Their porch has a painted wood floor and a pale-blue beadboard ceiling. An end table fashioned from a Singer sewing machine base (her great-grandmother's) with a piece of glass on top sits alongside secondhand wicker chairs and a "nap-depth" sofa with cushions covered in outdoor fabric. "The kids come back from the pool and sit out there with wet bathing suits, and I couldn't care less," Chris MacBride says.

The porch acts as a summer family room where the MacBrides spend time together, read and play board games. It's put to good use in the winter months, too, as storage for muddy cleats, firewood and cases of soft drinks. "It's a fun space that I can reinvent to suit our needs," she says. "That's harder to do with an interior space."

Now the MacBrides' porch is the one providing inspiration: The neighbors on one side recently added a porch, and the neighbors on the other side are having one built. Three other friends in different neighborhoods also have added screened porches. "We've inspired friends, and no one has been disappointed. It's contagious. Once you have a porch, you won't want to go back to not having one," she says.

Kate McCauley and her husband, Jim Balick, are renovating their Arlington house. When the first set of architectural plans proposed enclosing the porch to expand the living room, their response was "absolutely not." The porch is "tiny and nondescript, but it's a real part of our lives," McCauley says. "It's messy with kids' gear and shoes and hockey sticks and baseball hats and balls ... but we have too many good associations. It's how we got to know our neighbors, and it makes all the difference in the world to us."

Not all homeowners feel the same way. Two years ago, Laura Polly of Arlington traded in her family's screened porch and deck for a home office and a walk-in closet. At less than eight feet wide, the porch was too narrow to furnish, Polly says, and therefore rarely used. Expanding wasn't an option, so they tore it down and built a small, two-story addition. "It seemed like unused space that we could recapture," Polly says. "What we really needed was closet space."

After two years of living with her own lack of closet space, Henning says, she would still choose her porch over more storage. She's not against expanding the house, but only if the porch remained intact. "I would never get rid of the porch," she says. "Never."

THE WASHINGTON POST

The recently added screened porch in Bonnie Washington's Chevy Chase, Md., house makes an ideal coloring spot for Corey White, 3, but it was also intended as a refuge from voracious mosquitoes.

Before you build your own porch...

By TERRI SAPIENZA
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Thinking of adding a screened porch? Here are some things to consider:

PLACEMENT
Think carefully about where you site a porch, builders and architects say. Ideally, the addition should not block the house's main view outside but should be built to one side. Before you build, be aware of how much sun your house gets and where, and how the porch will change that. If possible, the porch should not block light into the house or get too much direct sun during the day.

LIGHT
A porch will reduce natural light in adjacent interior spaces. Adding skylights to the structure can replace some of that light. And the higher the roof, the more light is let in.

BUILDING ON AN EXISTING DECK
In most cases, a screened porch cannot be built on top of a deck, experts say. Most decks cannot support a second story or a roof system. More likely than not, a deck will have to be reinforced or replaced with a sturdier foundation.

MAINTENANCE
Screens have a tendency to pop out and can tear, so maintenance can be a factor.

AMENITIES
Options have increased. Today's screened porches can be equipped with amenities once considered only for interior spaces, such as electric fans, recessed lighting, cable TV, cabinetry and fireplaces.

SECURITY
If someone wants to break into a porch, they can.

Answers to home questions

By GARY DYMSKI
© 2008, NEWSDAY

Q.: I have a 2,300-square-foot home that has groundwater coming up into the basement. I installed a drainage system with a sump pump to eliminate the problem. It is working fine, however, should we lose power I am concerned that the basement will be flooded. Do you have any recommendations regarding generators? What type of fuel and what size would you suggest to operate the sump pump, oil burner, refrigerator, freezer and some lights?

A.: Actually, there's an easy answer to the first part of your question. Match the rated output of the generator to the maximum anticipated power to be used. It's a three-step process:

Calculate the wattage requirements for the tools, items and appliances that need power. The watts should be listed on the identification plate of the tool or appliance, plus it will be listed in the owner's manual. If power is listed in amps, multiply amps times volts to determine watts.

Add the watts of all items that will be operated simultaneously.

Find a generator with the power, in watts, that exceeds the total watts of the items by about 10 percent.

The Web site of the Yamaha Motor Corp. outlines the above steps in more detail (www.yamaha-motor.com), and it has information about picking a home generator for emergencies. (Click the links to "outdoors" and "generators.")

As for fuel, I think a gas-powered generator would be best. While propane might be cleaner to use, you'll find it easier to buy and store gas.

Of course, running a generator indoors, without ventilation, will lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. Follow the directions in the owner's manual.

THIS IS A HAMMER

Home warranties

By SAMANTHA MAZZOTTA

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Q: What do you think of these home warranties for women like us who can't fix a darn thing?—The Girls in Philly

A: I'd say, read the fine print very carefully.

Home warranties are service contracts that cover repairs to a home and/or appliances and other equipment inside the home. Much like car insurance, the homeowner pays a fee (usually each year) against the possibility of an appliance breakdown, a plumbing issue or other household damage. When or if a problem occurs, the homeowner calls the home warranty company, which sends a repairman or contractor to the house to fix or replace the broken item.

This is not a bad idea for the homeowner who isn't hot on do-it-yourself projects. However, like any product or service, caveat emptor (let the buyer beware) is the watchword here. Research home-warranty providers carefully. Ask other homeowners if they have a home warranty, and about their experiences with repair services through these providers.

Always get a price quote from the provider. Ideally, get quotes from as many providers as possible. Then, compare them. Home warranties cover specific items based on the type of warranty you purchase, the square footage of your home and the age of the house, among other things. Look specifically for exclusions from coverage.

Ask the warranty provider any and all questions that come to mind. If an outside contractor works on a broken item, is the item still covered? Can you even call in an outside contractor? Are there additional fees for certain specialist contractors? What if you're not happy with the repair? What legal recourse do you have?

So, while a home warranty can be a good expense, do your homework carefully to get the best coverage.

HOME TIP: Most home-warranty providers charge an additional trade service fee (about $100) when a contractor is sent to repair something in your home—a small additional expense, but one you should be prepared for.

Send questions or home-repair tips to homeguru2000@hotmail.com, or write This Is a Hammer, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

KITCHEN MAGIC

Chewy Chocolate Chip Oatmeal-Raisin Cookies

If you thought the words "delicious" and "low-fat" could never be used to describe one cookie, think again. This one's chewy, sweet and chock-full of chocolate bits, yet it still packs only 2 grams of fat per serving.

Nonstick cooking spray

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) light corn-oil spread (56 to 60 percent fat)
- 3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 large egg whites
- 1 large egg
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup low-fat semisweet-chocolate pieces
- 1/2 cup dark seedless raisins
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Spray 2 large cookie sheets with nonstick cooking spray.

2. In large bowl, with mixer at low speed, beat corn-oil spread, brown sugar and sugar until combined. Increase speed to high; beat until light and fluffy.

3. Add egg whites, egg and vanilla extract; beat until smooth.

4. With spoon, stir in flour, oats, chocolate pieces, raisins, baking soda and salt until combined.

5. Drop dough by level tablespoons, about 2 inches apart, on cookie sheets. Place cookie sheets on 2 oven racks. Bake cookies 10 to 12 minutes until golden, rotating cookie sheets between upper and lower racks halfway through baking time. With pancake turner, remove cookies to wire racks to cool.

6. Repeat until all batter is used. Store cookies in tightly covered containers.

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MetroShed's designs can be used as art studios, pool houses or guest suites. THE WASHINGTON POST

Not your grandfather's storage shed

By ANNIE GROER

© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Space-starved homeowners who need extra storage but not in the form of a backyard microcottage with Dutch doors and scallop trim should check out two Web sites offering sleek alternatives: www.modern-shed.com and www.metroshed.com.

About eight years ago, Seattle husband-and-wife designers Ryan Smith and Ahna Holder built a cool, stripped-down storage structure because their '50s ranch house had no basement, garage or attic and "we couldn't find anything architecturally appealing," Smith says. Friends and clients soon wanted one, so in 2005, the couple started Modern-Shed.

Their panel-based kits come in various sizes, colors and finishes. Outer walls are made of Hardie fiber cement panels; the roof is galvanized metal over wood. Units require concrete footings, which are not included. Prices start at $5,000 for a basic 8-by-10-foot garden shed, while $14,000 buys a 10-by-12 insulated, finished, pre-painted version suitable for occasional habitation. (Add $900 to $1,600 for shipping to the East Coast.)

"Someone in California put two together as a his-and-hers work space," Smith says. "For a climate like Minnesota, we make walls thicker and add appropriate insulation."

An Orlando-based company, MetroShed, sells kits of 4-by-4-foot insulated wall panels "that are placed together like Lego blocks," says company president David Ballinger. They have pine and cedar exteriors, a polycarbonate roof, interior birch paneling and pine flooring. A model slightly smaller than 120 square feet costs $8,000 delivered. Art studios top the list of uses, Ballinger says, but the structures also make good pool houses, cigar rooms and guest suites (at least in temperate climates). One customer put his shed on wheels and hauled it to a field, the better to watch over his llamas and alpacas.

Both companies urge customers to check zoning laws before ordering.

If you can afford it, mansion market is hot

By DANIEL BUBBEO

© 2008, NEWSDAY

MELVILLE, N.Y.—It's not every day one sees a mansion on Long Island's Gold Coast go on the market—though it does seem lately like it's at least every few weeks.

Recently, the Old Westbury estate of the late horse breeder Cynthia Phipps was put up for sale at the hefty price of $13 million. A few days later, the nearby house that once belonged to famed architect Thomas Hastings went on the market for $12.5 million.

And then, another Old Westbury estate, this one belonging to heiress Cornelia Guest, went on the block for $20 million.

"It's where I grew up, but I just don't spend enough time there," Guest says. "It's an equestrian estate, and it needs a family that loves horses. I spend a lot of time in Los Angeles now, and I want to create my own family home."

Guest's attitude isn't unusual among the modern generation who grew up in old-moneyed families. Many of the current owners of the glorious manses that dot Long Island's North Shore are no longer interested in minding their manors, especially when they're also feeling the pinch of Long Island's high taxes, says Arlene Travis, president of Mansions & Millionaires, which runs designer show houses at Gold Coast mansions. Annual taxes on the Guest house, for example, are $85,897.

NEWSDAY

The 20-acre Old Westbury, N.Y., estate of the late horse breeder Cynthia Phipps is on the market for $13 million.

"The estates that have quite a bit of property are being taxed quite heavily," she says. "A lot of these homes that used to belong to old families are so difficult to maintain for the newer generations. Those family members are no longer interested in hanging onto the past."

Instead, the North Shore is looking more like the Glitzy Coast as celebrities with hefty wallets move into the area, Travis says. In recent years, tabloid magnets Jennifer Lopez and hubby Marc Anthony have become Gold Coasters, and in 2005 Grammy winner Alicia Keys bought her own Muttontown crib—a 15-room center hall Colonial—for $3.995 million.

"People of that ilk don't really mind using their incomes in this way. It becomes part of their business life," Travis says. "There's also a specific clientele who are totally interested in them for their history. These homes are definitely not being bought by Mr. and Mrs. America."

Patrick Mackay, president of Piping Rock Associates, a Locust Valley real estate broker, says he doesn't see anything unusual about the current number of Gold Coast mansions on the market. "We deal in the high end, so we don't think there's any great increase in mansions for sale now than normal," he says.

The Good Life

THE WASHINGTON POST

Cailyn Dillard, 4, of Lusby, Md., plays mini golf at Old Pro Golf in Ocean City, Md., unfazed by some hairy-looking bystanders. Wackiness is key to the cheery yet maddening game, which persists even though the number of courses has declined over the years.

Mini golf mantra: The wackier, the better

By MEGAN GREENWELL
© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

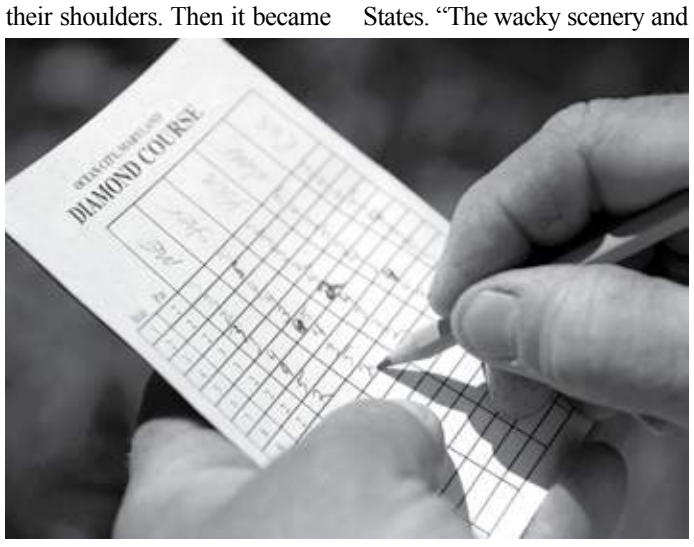
REHOBOTH BEACH, Del.— In a world in which Grand Theft Auto IV can make $500 million in its first week of existence, how can the most innocent game of all survive?

We speak, of course, of miniature golf (goofy golf, adventure golf or Putt-Putt, if you prefer). Sure, the number of courses has declined over the years, but there's no real threat of the cheery yet maddening game going under. Mini golf is targeted at people 4 to 104, and those in the know fully expect the 4-year-olds to be playing in 100 years.

"We come every time we're here," said Marilyn Thomas of Towson, Md., playing several rounds recently with her twin 12-year-old boys. "For us, it's as much a part of the beach as the sand is."

Mini golf loves anyone who loves it back. And, really, who doesn't love mini golf? Cultural references abound: Bart Simpson was conceived in the castle of a mini golf course, and the Karate Kid and the object of his affection had to push a car down a hill on their way to play a round. Nearly everyone has a mini golf memory.

Once, miniature golf was for rich ladies who were too delicate or modest to swing a club past their shoulders. Then it became the quintessential everyman's game, offering perhaps the best chance for an 8-year-old to whump Dad in competition and an innocent setting for millions of awkward teenage dates.



THE WASHINGTON POST

Bill Wheeler of Gettysburg, Pa., keeps score at Professor Hacker's Lost Treasure Golf in Ocean City, Md. The colorful game has more sedate roots in mid-19th century Scotland.

"Some look at it as a sport, and in Europe they've tried to integrate it as sport, but in America it's a leisure activity," said Steven Hix, executive director of the Fort Worth-based Miniature Golf Association United States. "The wacky scenery and the story line is the trick, not so much the golf."

Mini golf began in Scotland in the mid-19th century, with no thought of wacky. It was simply a cheap knockoff of its more refined cousin, targeted toward women. While men played the real thing, ladies could play 50-yard courses that used bunkers and ponds as obstacles. The first U.S. mini golf course opened in Pinehurst, N.C., in 1916, but it wasn't very wacky: It was modeled after gardens at the Louvre in Paris and was never opened to the public.

Then came Tom Thumb Golf.

Built atop Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga, Tenn., it's fair to say that Tom Thumb brought the wacky. Frieda Carter, a plumber's wife, used leftover tile, hollow logs and pieces of sewer pipe to create the first unique mini golf course.

The game took off and got a little too lively for some. Throughout the 1930s and '40s—when there were about 50,000 mini golf outlets nationwide—dozens of local laws were created to regulate the courses, which would often stay open until dawn while players kept entire neighborhoods awake.

There were no pirate ship themes, no chances to win a free round with a hole-in-one, no crazy hats. That changed in the 1960s, thanks in part to the man who still runs Old Pro Golf empire, with seven courses, in Ocean City, Md.

In the early days, Herb Schoellkopf a pioneer of the Philadelphia school of mini golf, a movement involving course owners who wanted to make the sport even wackier. They created themed courses, playing off popular fads of the day: Pirates were big hits then as now; the once-popular cowboys-and-Indians theme fell out of favor.

"When you think of the old courses with a flat path and one obstacle per hole, and now they're more like life-sized dioramas, it's almost like a different sport," said Rick Schoellkopf, Herb's son and second in command at Old Pro Golf.

Rick Schoellkopf said the philosophy of most courses roughly follows the Philadelphia school, and the cost of play hasn't increased much, either. But what was once a game open only to the elite has become big business that welcomes the masses and struggles with costs. All but the most well-established or well-funded course operators have been pushed out of the market in some areas. The cost of land and the push to go bigger and flashier don't come cheap.

Rehoboth Beach has four courses, down from about 15 a decade ago. Condos now sit where many courses once did. In Myrtle Beach, S.C., one newer course was reported to cost $4.5 million to build. Schoellkopf said that someone breaking into the business needs at least a quarter-million dollars to create a new course, excluding the cost of land, just to keep up.

The Schoellkopfs learned that mini golf is best at the beach. Once the owners of 13 courses in five states, they have eliminated all but the Ocean City locations because of high land prices and lack of interest in suburbs and cities. From a peak of 50,000 courses in the middle of the last century, Hix estimates there are only about 7,500 left.

Of course, mini golf belongs at the beach. There's no homework, no soccer practice and no dentist appointments; there's (probably) no Wii golf at the rental house. In this age of overscheduled first-graders and BlackBerry-addicted parents, about the only time for a mindless round of mini golf is during a beach vacation.

At Rehoboth's Shell We Golf, Max Mayer, 10, of New Jersey, had almost forgotten last week's yelling match, initiated when his mother told him he would not be allowed to vacation with his Nintendo DS. He was happily putting through 18 holes, pumping his fists and trash-talking his sister when he made a good shot.

"It's the best thing to do at the beach because everybody can play together," Max said, drawing an approving smile from his mother. More quietly, he added, "But I really like it because I always win."

THE WASHINGTON POST

Cheesiness is essential for the true mini golf experience: Getting in touch with their inner cavemen at Old Pro Golf in Ocean City, Md., are, top to bottom, West Point cadets Pete Duff, Will Nagy and Dan Kurber, and Nagy's girlfriend Casey Deery.

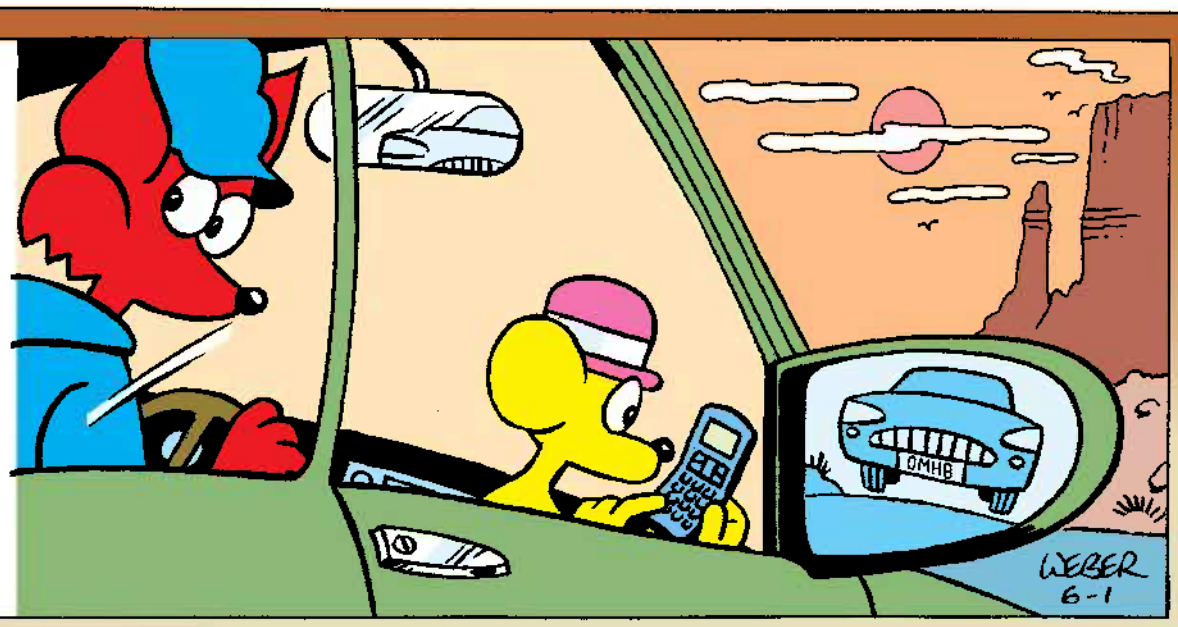
Bob Weber Jr.'s Slylock Fox and Comics for Kids

Which two runners are exactly alike?

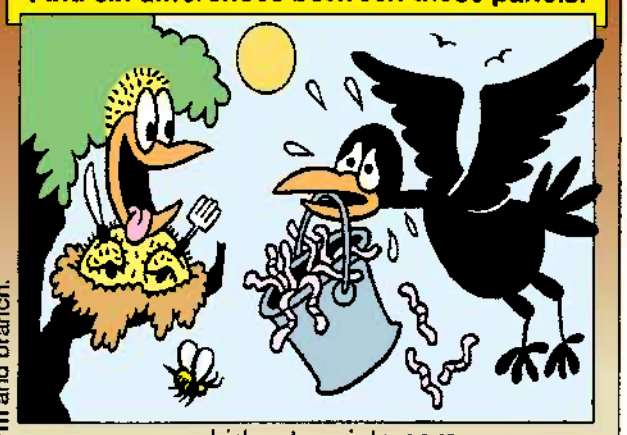
Answer -- Numbers one and three.

Slylock Fox is being followed by a mysterious motorist. Max Mouse observed and reported the car's license plate, **OMH8**, to the police. But the police computer doesn't have a record of the plate. Slylock Fox knows why. Do you?

Solution -- Max made his observation from the mirror, which reversed the image of the plate. It actually reads **8HMO**.



Find six differences between these panels.

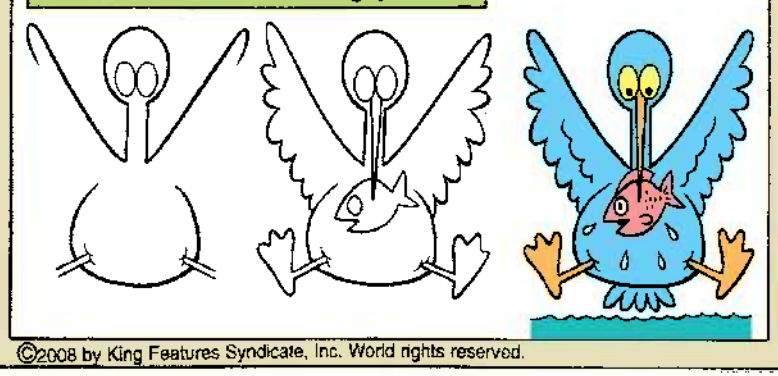


www.kidcartoonists.com

Answer -- Bee, leaves, knife, feather, worm and branch.

Newl The fourth ***Find the six differences*** collection is here. Send $4 (check/money order in U.S. funds made payable to King Features) with your name and address to **Six Differences No. 4,** P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475

HOW TO DRAW a hungry heron



YOUR DRAWING

Today's terrific artist is Taylor Oleshak, age 10, of Lakewood, NY

Submit your drawing at **www.kidcartoonists.com**

The scrambled words are things found on a car. How many can you unscramble?

1) EUMPBR
2) HATEGLDIH
3) ROMRIR
4) LNEDHWIDSI

Answer -- 1) Bumper 2) Headlight 3) Mirror 4) Windshield

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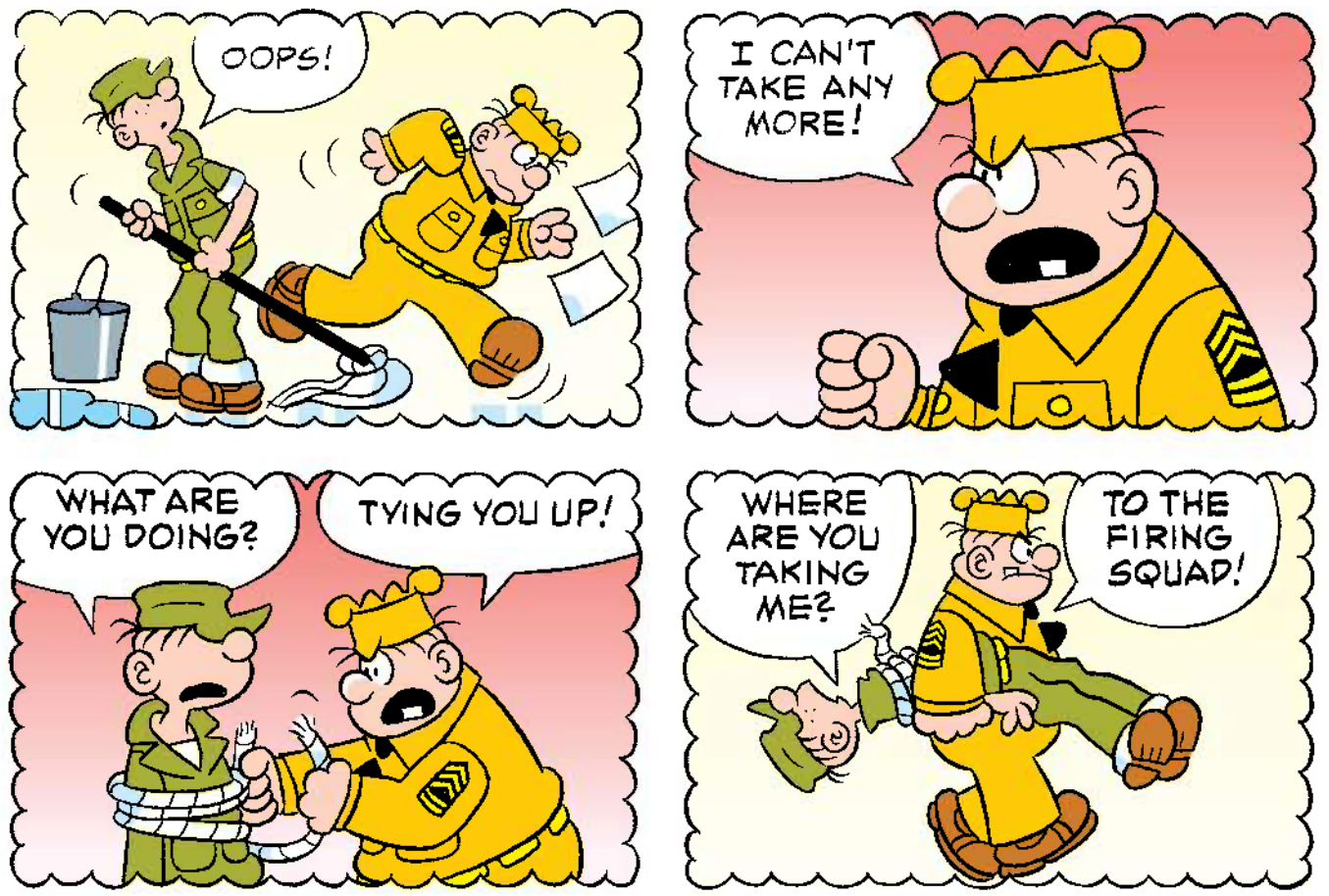
THE FAMILY CIRCUS®

By Bil Keane

Mort Walker's

beetle bailey®


OOPS!
I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE!
I'VE HAD IT WITH YOU, BEETLE! COME HERE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
TYING YOU UP!
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
TO THE FIRING SQUAD!
STAND THERE!
FIRING SQUAD!
6-1
WWW.MORTWALKER.COM
YOU'RE FIRED!
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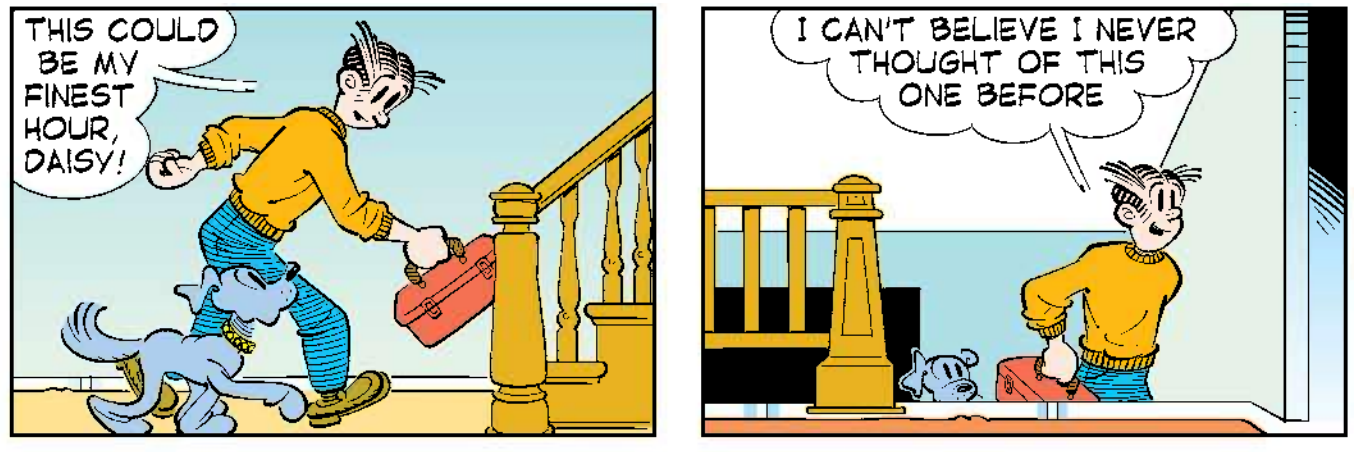
WOW! FOR A MINUTE I THOUGHT I WAS HAVING A NIGHTMARE!
GREG+ MORT WALKER

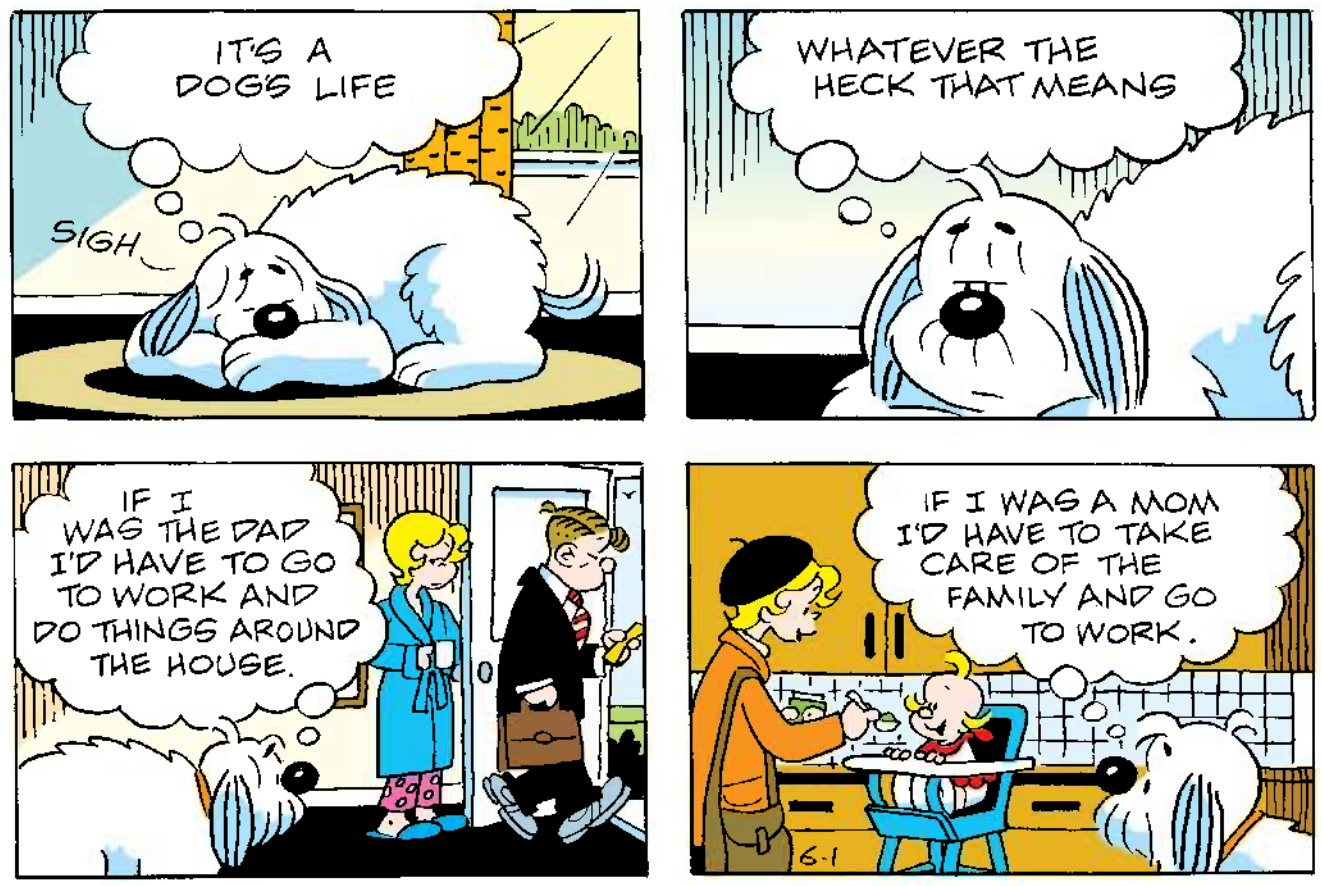
BLONDIE

BY DEAN YOUNG & JOHN MARSHALL


THIS COULD BE MY FINEST HOUR, DAISY!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I NEVER THOUGHT OF THIS ONE BEFORE
BRRRRR!
HEE! HEE! EVERY NOW AND THEN I COME UP WITH A VERY INGENIOUS PLAN!
AND THIS ONE HAS TO BE THE MOST INGENIOUS PLAN EVER!
FINALLY MY BATH WATER WILL BE SACRED...NOBODY, BUT NOBODY, CAN EVER INTERRUPT ME AGAIN!
www.blondie.com
HEY! THE DOOR'S LOCKED!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
© 2008 King Features Syndicate Inc. World Rights Reserved.
I WANTED TO BE THE FIRST ONE TO TRY OUT YOUR NEW LOCK, DEAR!
6-1
YOU'LL HAVE TO ADMIT, EXCEPT FOR THAT ONE GLITCH, IT WAS A PRETTY INGENIOUS LITTLE PLAN

Hi and Lois

by BRIAN and GREG WALKER

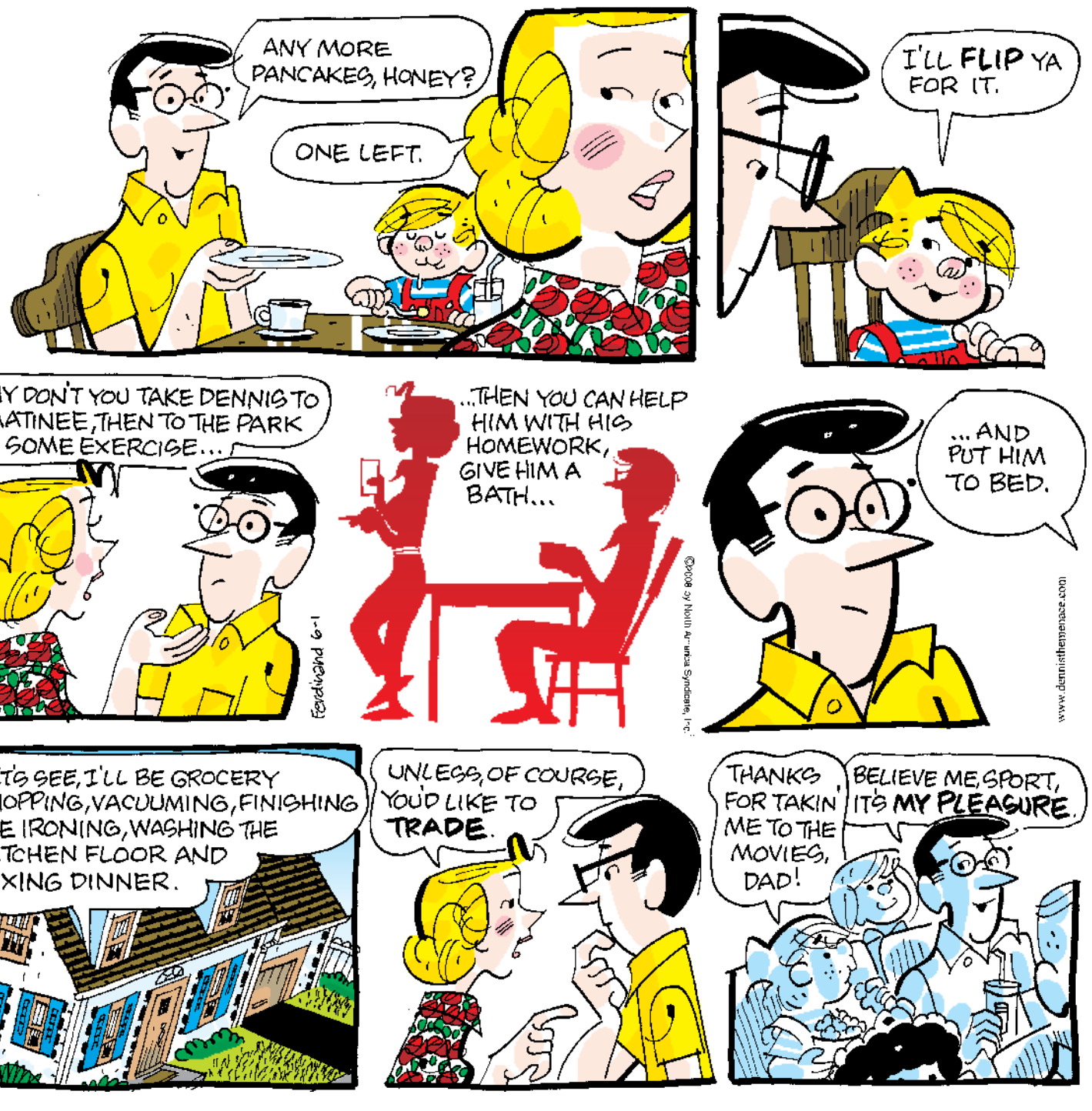

IT'S A DOG'S LIFE
SIGH
WHATEVER THE HECK THAT MEANS
SOMETIMES I WONDER WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE HUMAN
IF I WAS THE DAD I'D HAVE TO GO TO WORK AND DO THINGS AROUND THE HOUSE.
IF I WAS A MOM I'D HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THE FAMILY AND GO TO WORK.
6-1

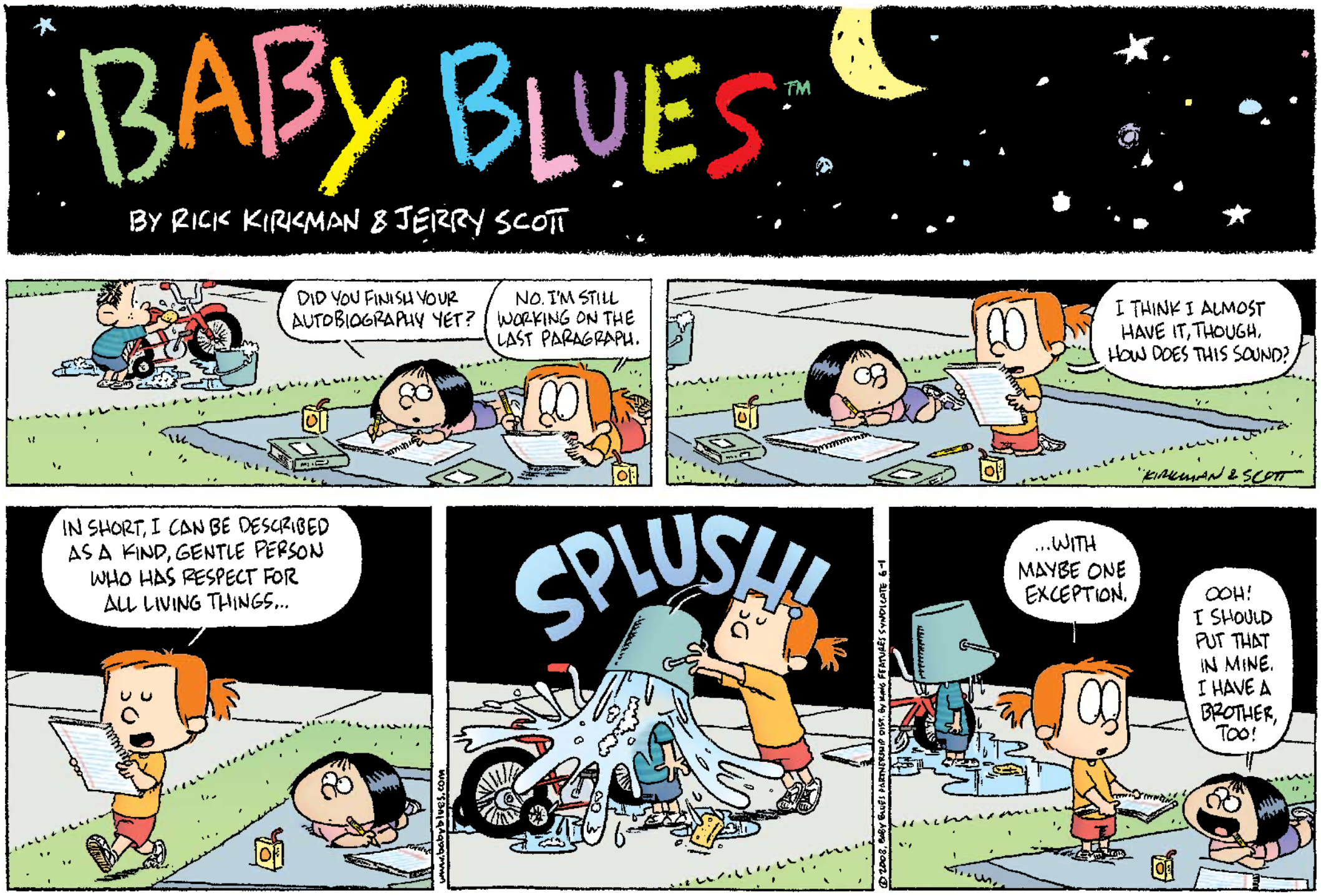
IF I WAS A KID I'D HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL AND DO CHORES.
WHY WOULD I TRADE MY LIFESTYLE FOR ALL THAT RESPONSIBILITY?
CHANCE BROWNE
©2008 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved
I GUESS I'M JUST A BIG BABY.

Dennis the Menace

Hank Ketcham's

No Contest


ANY MORE PANCAKES, HONEY?
ONE LEFT.
I'LL FLIP YA FOR IT.
SO WHAT'S ON MY AGENDA FOR TODAY, BOSS?
GLAD YOU ASKED.
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE DENNIS TO A MATINEE, THEN TO THE PARK FOR SOME EXERCISE...
...THEN YOU CAN HELP HIM WITH HIS HOMEWORK, GIVE HIM A BATH...
...AND PUT HIM TO BED.
Ferdinand 6-1
©2008 by North America Syndicate, Inc.
www.dennisthemenace.com
AND WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?
MY PLANS?
LET'S SEE, I'LL BE GROCERY SHOPPING, VACUUMING, FINISHING THE IRONING, WASHING THE KITCHEN FLOOR AND FIXING DINNER.
UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU'D LIKE TO TRADE.
THANKS FOR TAKIN' ME TO THE MOVIES, DAD!
BELIEVE ME, SPORT, IT'S MY PLEASURE.


BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
DID YOU FINISH YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHY YET?
NO. I'M STILL WORKING ON THE LAST PARAGRAPH.
I THINK I ALMOST HAVE IT, THOUGH. HOW DOES THIS SOUND?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
IN SHORT, I CAN BE DESCRIBED AS A KIND, GENTLE PERSON WHO HAS RESPECT FOR ALL LIVING THINGS...
SPLUSH!
...WITH MAYBE ONE EXCEPTION.
OOH! I SHOULD PUT THAT IN MINE. I HAVE A BROTHER, TOO!
www.babyblues.com
© 2008, BABY BLUES PARTNERSHIP DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE 6-1

Salome's Stars

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Lots of possibilities begin to open up by midweek. Some seem more appealing than others. But wait for more facts to emerge later on before you consider which to choose.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Bravo to the determined Bovine. While others might give up, you continue to search for answers. Expect your Taurean tenacity to begin paying off by week's end.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You might want to consider stepping back from the task at hand for a while. This could help you get a better perspective on what you've done and what still needs to be done.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Your keen Cancerian insight should help you determine whether a new offer is solid or just more fluff 'n' stuff. The clues are all there waiting for you to find them.

LEO (July 23 to August 22) Being ignored is difficult for any proud Leo or Leona. But pushing yourself back into the spotlight might be unwise. Instead, let things work themselves out at their own pace.

VIRGO (August 23 to September 22) Trying to uncover a colleague's secret under the pretext of showing concern is ill-advised. Control your curiosity to avoid raising resentment in the workplace.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Expect to hear good news about a loved one. Also, be prepared for some changes in several family relationships that could develop from this lucky turn of events.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Some surprises are expected to accompany a number of changes that will continue through part of next week. At least one could involve a romantic situation.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) You might be upset by some of your critics. But most of your associates continue to have faith in your ability to get the job done, and done well.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19) A workplace goal that suddenly seems out of reach is no problem for the sure-footed Goat, who moves steadily forward despite any obstacles placed in his or her way.

AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18) Uncertainty about who is right and who isn't might keep you from making a clear-cut decision. Wait until you know more about what you're being asked to decide.

PISCES (February 19 to March 20) Be careful to keep your emotions in check when dealing with a demanding personal situation. You need to set an example of strength for others to follow.

BORN THIS WEEK: You have an extraordinary ability to rally people to do their best. You would be a treasure as a teacher.

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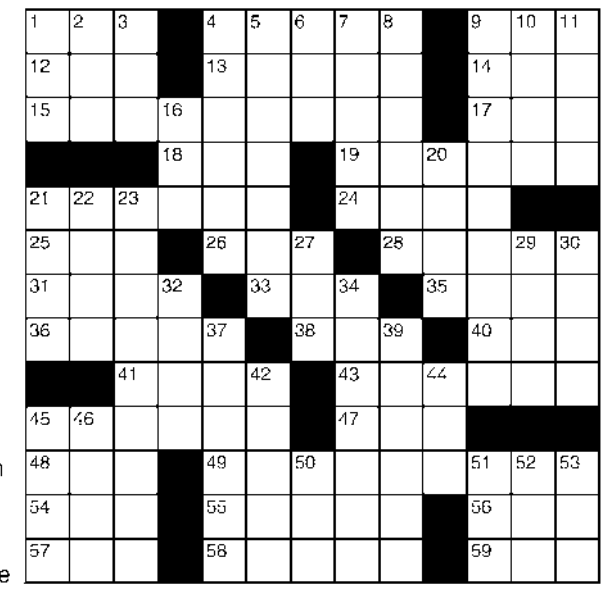
King Crossword



ACROSS
1 Conditions
4 The Mamas and the -
9 Set up
12 Afternoon social
13 Superior to
14 A Gabor sister
15 Formal withdrawal
17 Chap
18 Queue after Q
19 Electrician's task
21 Singer Twain
24 Under (Fr.)
25 Legume holder
26 Wire measure
28 Puts in jeopardy
31 Pinnacle
33 Convent dweller
35 Boy (Sp.)
36 Pelts
38 Sailor
40 "- the ramparts we watched"
41 Body of an organism
43 Hood of a Brit's car
45 Sheriffs' bands
47 Brock of baseball
48 Sapporo sash
49 Something added
54 Cattle call?
55 Drive out roughly
56 That woman
57 Calligrapher's tool
58 Undoes deles
59 "Bam!"

DOWN
1 "If - Tuesday, ..."
2 Retainer
3 Pouch
4 Here and there
5 Just say no
6 Luau dish
7 Acknowledges
8 Grad-to-be
9 Relief from suffering
10 Terrible guy?
11 "West Side Story" faction
16 Sea flier
20 Destroy
21 Resorts international?
22 Sell temporarily
23 Ticket price
27 Drag behind
29 Leg joint
30 Kind
32 Grandson of Eve
34 "... the - Roman of them all"
37 Fingerpaints
39 Gives a leg up
42 Neckwear
44 Greek consonants
45 Circumstance partner
46 Reed instrument
50 Billiards stick
51 AOL, for ex.
52 Discoverer's cry
53 Fresh

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top ten

Tattooed Body Parts

1. Lower Back
2. Wrist
3. Foot
4. Ankle
5. Armband
6. Backs
7. Arm
8. Chest
9. Breast
10. Neck

Source: www.vanishing tattoo.com

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KING CROSSWORD LAST SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

I	F	S		P	A	P	A	S		R	I	G
T	E	A		A	B	O	V	E		E	V	A
S	E	C	E	S	S	I	O	N		M	A	N
			R	S	T		W	I	R	I	N	G
S	H	A	N	I	A		S	O	U	S		
P	O	D		M	I	L		R	I	S	K	S
A	C	M	E		N	U	N		N	I	N	O
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O	B	I		A	C	C	E	S	S	I	O	N
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United States

Snag in accord to return Texas sect kids to parents

By MICHELLE ROBERTS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SAN ANGELO, Texas (AP)—Parents' hopes of quick reunions with more than 400 children removed from a polygamist sect's ranch were dashed Friday after their attorneys and a judge clashed over proposed restrictions.

A decision by Texas District Judge Barbara Walther means that to regain custody, the 38 mothers who filed the complaint that led the Texas Supreme Court to reject the state's massive seizure must personally sign an agreement their attorneys and state child-welfare officials have proposed.

That could add days to the process, attorneys for some of the other mothers likely affected by the decision said, because the women are scattered across the state to be close to their children in foster care.

"It's not as simple as going across the street and setting up a booth," said attorney Andrea Sloan, who represents several young FLDS women and minors who contend they should be reclassified as adults.

Walther had wanted to add restrictions to the agreement worked out by the parents' attorneys and Texas Child Protective Services, but the parents' attorneys argued that she didn't have the authority.

The judge then said she would sign the initial document, but only after all 38 mothers involved in the case the high court ruled on signed it first.

Mars Lander has short-circuit problem

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—Scientists for the Phoenix Mars Lander are wrestling with an intermittent short circuit on the spacecraft.

The problem is in a device that will analyze ice and soil dug from the planet's surface, the scientists said Friday. The short circuit was found during testing done before the mission's experiments get under way.

The short circuit isn't considered critical, said William Boyton of the University of Arizona's Lunar and Planetary Laboratory. Boynton is in charge of the device that will heat and analyze samples scooped up by the lander's robotic arm.

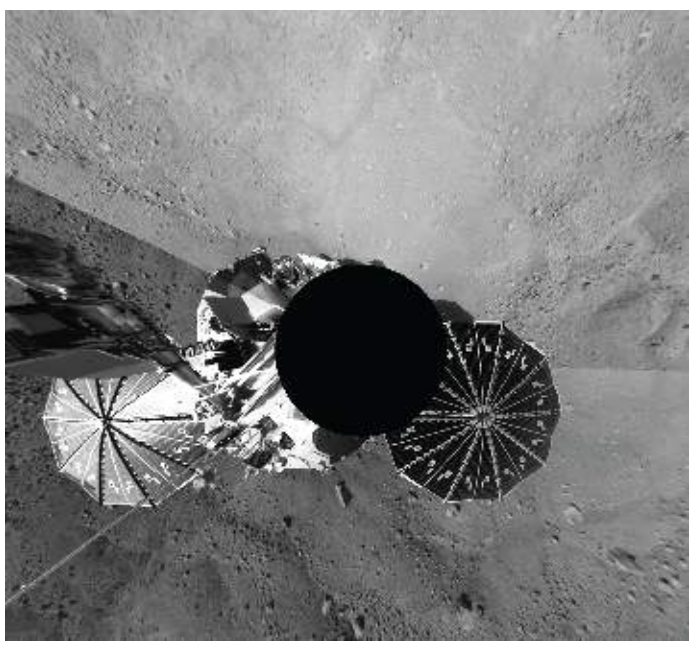
He said scientists know what is triggering the problem and what actions make it go away, and are working on solutions.

Phoenix was designed to study whether the Martian north pole region could support primitive life forms and is to perform several experiments seeking traces of organic compounds.

Team members in charge of the robotic arm said new photos show the lander may be resting on splotches of ice. Washington University scientist Ray Arvidson said the spacecraft's thrusters may have uncovered the ice when the robot landed last Sunday. Mission planners aimed the craft to the red planet's northern regions hoping to find ice just under the surface.

"We're really pushing for ice but we don't know if that's the case yet," Arvidson said.

The three-month mission is led by the University of Arizona, Tucson, and managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.



AP

The Surface Stereo Imager Right on NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander acquired the individual images that are combined into this one view, provided by NASA, Thursday, May 29, 2008. The spacecraft successfully freed its 8-foot robotic arm from the restraints that kept it folded up and protected from vibrations during the launch and landing, scientists said Thursday.

NYC crane collapses, kills two workers

AP

The collapsed crane lies at the scene of a crane collapse on New York's Upper East Side Friday, May 30, 2008.

NEW YORK (AP)—A construction crane snapped and smashed into an apartment building with a thunderous roar Friday, killing two workers in the city's second such tragedy in 2 1/2 months and renewing fears about the safety of hundreds of cranes towering over the New York skyline.

The collapse happened despite stepped-up inspections and a shake-up in the city Buildings Department after the earlier accident, which killed seven people in March.

The 200-foot crane fell apart on Manhattan's Upper East Side, where contractors were building a 32-story luxury condo complex, about 12 stories high.

Scott Bair, a foreman who arrived at the site seconds after the crane fell, said several co-workers told him the crane had just dropped off a load of materials on the top of the building and was turning to pick up a load from the street when "the turntable popped off—even though there are 16 bolts that hold it down. It could be an issue with the bolts."

The turntable is a piece of equipment that helps the crane rotate.

Acting Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri said that investigators "will be focusing on a particular weld that failed" on the crane, and noted that the 24-year-old crane's model, the Kodiak, is out of production and one of only four in the city.

ACROSS THE NATION

Clinton expects superdelegates to decide next week

HELENA, Mont. (AP)—Hillary Rodham Clinton said Friday she expects uncommitted superdelegates to begin making the choice that will decide her marathon Democratic primary race against Barack Obama soon after the Tuesday's primaries. In a conference call with Montana reporters, Clinton was asked about the effort by top Democratic leaders to push for a quick end to the fight for the presidential nomination after primaries in South Dakota and Montana next week. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said that he, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and party chairman Howard Dean will urge uncommitted delegates to choose sides. Clinton said: "I think that after the final primaries, people are going to start making up their minds. I think that is the natural progression that one would expect."

Nurse accused of giving patients bleach arrested

LUFKIN, Texas (AP)—A former nurse accused of intentionally injecting two patients with bleach at an East Texas dialysis center was arrested Friday, police said. The arrest warrant charges Kimberly Clark Saenz, 34, of Angelina County, with two counts of aggravated assault, a second degree felony. She was being booked into jail Friday afternoon. Bond was set at $200,000. Two witnesses reported seeing Saenz draw bleach into syringes and inject the bleach into two dialysis lines on April 28, Lufkin police said in a news release. Both DaVita Dialysis Center in Lufkin patients injected with bleach survived. One required treatment at a hospital, police said.

Storm sweeps through Ill.; lawmakers run for cover

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP)—Tornado warning sirens chased lawmakers to the statehouse basement, a semitrailer was blown from a roadway and homes and an airport building were damaged as severe storms battered parts of Illinois and Indiana on Friday. Illinois lawmakers, lobbyists, reporters and secretaries packed the tunnels beneath the 120-year-old Capitol for about 45 minutes as powerful wind, hail and rain pelted Springfield. "It was extremely hot down there ... I was concerned about some people being overheated," said Rep. Bill Black, R-Danville. Aides said Gov. Rod Blagojevich was in a secure location. The National Weather Service had not confirmed several reports of tornado touchdowns in central Illinois. There were no reports of injuries.

Spilled mud causes crashes in La., 18 people hurt

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—A dump truck spilled a load of mud inside a traffic tunnel, causing a chain-reaction crash of 23 vehicles on Friday in suburban New Orleans. Eighteen people were taken to hospitals, including a woman in labor. The dump truck driver fled the scene, Louisiana State Police spokesman Joseph Piglia said. If found, the driver could face charges and be held liable for damage to the tunnel. No one was seriously hurt, Piglia said. The condition of the pregnant woman was not immediately available. The crash occurred about 1 p.m. inside Harvey Tunnel, which passes under the Harvey Canal on the west bank of the Mississippi River. Vehicles hit each other and the tunnel itself. Inspections found no major damage of the tunnel structure, said Buzzy Wegener, the Department of Transportation and Development's assistant district administrator of operations for New Orleans.

Report: UCLA gave transplant to Japanese gang boss

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Los Angeles hospital provided liver transplants to four Japanese gang figures, including one of Japan's most powerful gang bosses, over a period when several hundred area patients died while awaiting transplants, according to a published report. The surgeries were performed at UCLA Medical Center by world-renowned liver surgeon Dr. Ronald W. Busuttil, executive chairman of UCLA's surgery department, the Los Angeles Times reported in a story posted on its Web site Thursday night. The Times cited a person familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity. The surgeries were performed between 2000 and 2004, and in each of those years more than 100 patients died awaiting liver transplants in the greater Los Angeles region, according to the Times.

Asia

AP

A father of a student who died in a school collapsed by May 12 earthquake, offers a prayer at the site in Juyuan, southwestern China's Sichuan province, Friday, May 30, 2008.

Families reunite in China quake zone

CHENGDU, China (AP)—Most of the 8,000 children found alone after China's devastating earthquake have been reunited with their parents, Chinese officials said Friday.

About 1,000 have not been spoken for but the need to find adoptive families is now far less than earlier thought, said Ye Lu, a senior official at the Civil Affairs Department in hard-hit Sichuan province.

Officials have been deluged by offers from within China and overseas to adopt orphans from the May 12 quake , but the need was now far less than was earlier thought, said Ye Lu, a senior official at the Civil Affairs Department in devastated Sichuan province.

"We are still getting thousands of calls per week asking about how to adopt, but we are still hoping to find the parents of these 1,000 kids," Ye said.

More than 18,000 people are still listed as missing more than two weeks after the quake, which crumbled scores of towns and left 5 million people homeless scattered across hardest-hit Sichuan province.

The government on Friday raised the confirmed death toll to 68,858. Officials expect the final tally to top 80,000.

Separately, officials upgraded the threat posed by waters rising quickly behind a mass of rocks and earth that tumbled from a mountainside when the tremor struck and blocked a river running through a valley dotted by dozens of villages.

Troops are moving almost 200,000 people who are in the direct path of the potential flood to higher ground—many of whom are already living in tents or other temporary shelters after their homes were destroyed.

'Obstructed efforts in Myanmar cost lives'

SINGAPORE (AP)—Myanmar's obstruction of international efforts to help cyclone victims cost "tens of thousands of lives," Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Saturday in his strongest condemnation to date of the military government there.

"We have reached out, frankly, to Myanmar multiple times during this crisis in very direct ways," Gates told an international audience. "It's not been us that have been deaf and dumb in response to the pleas of the international community, but the government of Myanmar. We have reached out, they have kept their hands in their pockets."

With U.S., British and French Navy ships off the coast of Myanmar poised to leave because they have been blocked from delivering assistance to the ravaged country, Gates said the U.S. will not forcefully bring in supplies without permission of the government, and will continue to "respect the sovereignty" of Myanmar.

Charges filed vs 5 suspects in RP bank robbery that killed 10

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine police filed charges Friday against five men accused in the killing of 10 people two weeks ago in the bloodiest bank robbery in the country.

Those facing robbery-with-homicide charges include one of the bank's security guards, a former security guard from another company and an ex-soldier, said Senior Superintendent Felipe Rojas, police chief of Laguna province south of Manila.

He said all three are currently in custody and have denied any involvement in the robbery.

Another two suspects also face robbery-with-homicide charges, but they are still at large, Rojas said. Another suspect was killed Thursday in a shootout with police, he said.

Rojas said investigators believe several other people, including a woman, were involved in the heist, but they have yet to be identified.

A security guard, a depositor and all eight employees of a Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. branch were shot in the head in a gangland-style execution May 16 in Cabuyao township in Laguna.

Investigators said all the victims except the bank manager were shot in the back of the head.

"In previous bank robberies, some were killed in hostage situations ... but this time they were defenseless and killed mercilessly," Rojas said.

NATO general sees long Afghanistan fight

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—The outgoing American commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan said the insurgency there will last for years unless Pakistan shuts down safe havens where militants train and recruit.

Gen. Dan McNeill also blamed new peace agreements in Pakistan's tribal areas for a spike in violence in eastern Afghanistan, where U.S. forces operate along the volatile border.

"If there are going to be sanctuaries where these terrorists, these extremists, these insurgents can train, can recruit, can regenerate, there's still going to be a challenge there," McNeill said in an interview with The Associated Press.

NATO has said there was a 50 percent spike in violence in eastern Afghanistan in April when compared with 2007.

Across The Globe

Jet crash in Honduras kills 4

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—A jetliner overshot a runway and raced onto a busy street in the Honduran capital on Friday, killing the pilot, two passengers and a motorist on the ground. At least 65 people were injured.

The Grupo Taca Airbus A320 with 140 people on board was flying a Los Angeles-San Salvador-Tegucigalpa route and was scheduled to head next to Miami. It ended up with its nosed smashed against a roadside embankment and its fuselage buckled and broken in places.

Authorities frantically hosed down cars trapped beneath the wreckage as thousands of gallons of fuel gushed from the jet.

Rescuers pried open part of the wreckage to get the pilot and co-pilot out, but the pilot didn't survive, said Cesar Villalta, director of Honduras' military hospital.

Passenger Harry Brautigam, a Nicaraguan who headed a regional development bank, died of heart failure. The body of a man trapped under the wreckage was believed to be a taxi driver.

Janneth Shantall, the wife of Brazilian Ambassador Brian Michael Fraser Neele, was also killed in the crash. The former head of Honduras' armed forces, Gen. Daniel Lopez Carballo, was also among the injured.

AP

Firefighters spray foam on the site of a commercial airliner crash in the city of Tegucigalpa, Friday, May 30, 2008.

Except for US, 111 nations adopt cluster bomb treaty

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP)—Chief negotiators of a landmark treaty banning cluster bombs predicted Friday that the United States will never again use the weapons, a critical component of American air and artillery power.

The treaty formally adopted Friday by 111 nations, including many of America's major NATO partners, would outlaw all current designs of cluster munitions and require destruction of stockpiles within eight years. It also opens the possibility that European allies could order U.S. bases located in their countries to remove cluster bombs from their stocks.

The United States and other leading cluster bomb makers—Russia, China, Israel, India and Pakistan—boycotted the talks, emphasized they would not sign the treaty and publicly shrugged off its value. All defended the overriding military value of cluster bombs, which carpet a battlefield with dozens to hundreds of explosions.

But treaty backers—who long have sought a ban because cluster bombs leave behind "duds" that later maim or kill civilians—insisted they had made it too politically painful for any country to use the weapons again.

WORLD BRIEFS

Iran's foreign minister slams US foreign policy

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)—Iran's foreign minister said Friday that the United States should conduct a "serious review" of its foreign policy after the presidential election—a signal that Iran is leaving open the possibility of improved relations with Washington. The comments by Manouchehr Mottaki—in an interview with The Associated Press—extended no clear offer for greater dialogue and included numerous jabs about the U.S. role in the Middle East and its global standing. "We don't want to make a problem for the American presidential candidates, but this election is among a limited number of American presidential elections where foreign policy plays a key role," Mottaki said a day after a U.N. conference on Iraqi reconstruction held outside Stockholm.

Opposition mounts to US-Iraq security deal

BAGHDAD (AP)—Tens of thousands rallied in several cities Friday against a proposed U.S.-Iraqi security agreement, raising doubts that negotiators can meet a July target to finalize a pact to keep U.S. troops in Iraq after the current U.N. mandate expires. Although U.S. officials insist they are not seeking permanent bases, suspicion runs deep among many Iraqis that the Americans want to keep at least some troops in the country for many years. "We denounce the government's intentions to sign a long-term agreement with the occupying forces," Asaad al-Nassiri, a sheik loyal to anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, said during a sermon in Kufa. "Our army will be under their control in this agreement, and this will lead to them having permanent bases in Iraq."

Tight security for Macedonian elections

SKOPJE, Macedonia (AP)—Macedonian authorities promised tight security for Sunday's national elections at the close of a campaign marred by violence, including an assassination attempt against an ethnic Albanian opposition leader. Interior minister Gordana Jankulovska said a "record high number" of police officers will be deployed at polling stations, especially in areas that have been hotspots in the past. Police said at least one helicopter and a special police unit were deployed briefly Friday in the village of Vejce, near Tetovo, in the heart of the tiny Balkan country's restless ethnic Albanian area. No incidents were reported. The governing center-right coalition of popular Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski seems likely to defeat Radmila Secerinska's opposition Social Democrats.

Chertoff: Conventional terror arms a key US focus

LONDON (AP)—Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff downplayed suggestions Friday that al-Qaida inspired terrorists could launch a nuclear attack against the West, saying the U.S. was more concerned about their use of conventional arms. Chertoff told students and journalists at London's Oxford Union that while some Islamic militants appear interested in acquiring weapons of mass destruction, they don't yet pose a serious threat. "In the immediate or near term, the focus is on conventional weapons, which can still be quite damaging. Something on the scale of 9/11 or the attacks on your transportation system. We have to look at the whole spectrum," he said at the famed debating society.

Focus

‘Miracle’ Marine refused to surrender will to live

By SHARON COHEN
AP NATIONAL WRITER

The young Marine came back from the war, with his toughest fight ahead of him. Merlin German waged that battle in the quiet of a Texas hospital, far from the dusty road in Iraq where a bomb exploded, leaving him with burns over 97 percent of his body.

No one expected him to survive.

But for more than three years, he would not surrender. He endured more than 100 surgeries and procedures. He learned to live with pain, to stare at a stranger’s face in the mirror. He learned to smile again, to joke, to make others laugh.

He became known as the “Miracle Man.”

But just when it seemed he would defy impossible odds, Sgt. Merlin German lost his last battle this spring—an unexpected final chapter in a story many imagined would have a happy ending.

“I think all of us had believed in some way, shape or form that he was invincible,” says Lt. Col. Evan Renz, who was German’s surgeon and his friend. “He had beaten so many other operations. ... It just reminded us, he, too, was human.”

■ ■ ■

It was near Ramadi, Iraq, on Feb. 21, 2005, that the roadside bomb detonated near German’s Humvee, hurling him out of the turret and engulfing him in flames.

When Renz and other doctors at the burn unit at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio first got word from Baghdad, they told his family he really didn’t have a chance. The goal: Get him back to America so his loved ones could say goodbye.

But when German arrived four days later, doctors, amazed by how well he was doing, switched gears. “We were going to do everything known to science,” Renz says. “He was showing us he can survive.”

Doctors removed his burn wounds and covered him with artificial and cadaver skin. They also harvested small pieces of German’s healthy skin, shipping them off to a lab where they were grown and sent back.

Doctors took skin from the few places he wasn’t burned: the soles of his feet, the top of his head and small spots on his abdomen and left shoulder.

Once those areas healed, doctors repeated the task. Again and again.

“Sometimes I do think I can’t do it,” German said last year in an Associated Press interview. “Then I think: Why not? I can do whatever I want.”

Renz witnessed his patient’s good and bad days.

“Early on, he thought, ‘This is ridiculous. Why am I doing this? Why am I working so hard?’” Renz recalls. “But every month or so, he’d say, ‘I’ve licked it.’ ... He was amazingly positive overall. ... He never complained. He’d just dig in and do it.”

Slowly, his determination paid off. He made enormous progress.

From a ventilator to breathing on his own.

From communicating with his eyes or a nod to talking.

From being confined to a hospital isolation bed with his arms and legs suspended—so his skin grafts would take—to moving into his own house and sleeping in his own bed.

Sometimes his repeated surgeries laid him up for days and he’d lose ground in his rehabilitation. But he’d always rebound. Even when he was hurting, he’d return to therapy—as long as he had his morning Red Bull energy drink.

“I can’t remember a time where he said, ‘I can’t do it. I’m not going to try,’ “ says Sgt. Shane Elder, a rehabilitation therapy assistant.

That despite the constant reminders that he’d never be the same. The physical fitness buff who could run miles and do dozens of push-ups struggled, at first, just to sit up on the edge of his bed. The one-time saxophone player had lost his fingers. The Marine with the lady-killer smile now had a raw, ripple-scarred face.

Lt. Col. Grant Olbrich recalls a day in 2006 when he stopped by German’s room and noticed he was crying softly. Olbrich, who heads a Marine patient affairs team at Brooke, says he sat with him awhile and asked: “What are you scared of?’ He said, ‘I’m afraid there will never be a woman who loves me.’ “

Olbrich says that was the lowest he ever saw German, but even then “he didn’t give up. ... He was unstoppable.”

AP

In this undated photo provided by Brooke Army Medical Center, Merlin German is seen.

His mother, Lourdes, remembers her son another way: “He was never really scared of anything.”

That toughness, says his brother, Ariel, showed up even when they were kids growing up in New York. Playing football, Merlin would announce: “Give me the ball. Nobody can knock me down.”

■ ■ ■

In nearly 17 months in the hospital, Merlin German’s “family” grew.

From the start, his parents, Lourdes and Hemery, were with him. They relocated to Texas. His mother helped feed and dress her son; they prayed together three, four times a day.

AP

Sgt. Merlin German, center, signs photos from his promotion ceremony at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Monday, May 21, 2007, as Norma Guerra looks on.

“She said she would never leave his side,” Ariel says. “She was his eyes, his ears, his feet, his everything.”

But many at the hospital also came to embrace German.

Norma Guerra, a public affairs spokeswoman who has a son in Iraq, became known as German’s “Texas mom.”

She read him action-packed stories at his bedside and arranged to have a DVD player in his room so he could watch his favorite gangster movies.

She sewed him pillows embroidered with the Marine insignia. She helped him collect New York Yankees memorabilia and made sure he met every celebrity who stopped by—magician David Blaine became a friend, and President Bush visited.

“He was a huge part of me,” says Guerra, who had German and his parents over for Thanksgiving. “I remember him standing there talking to my older sister like he knew her forever.”

German liked to gently tease everyone about fashion—his sense of style, and their lack of it.

Guerra says he once joked: “I’ve been given a second chance. I think I was left here to teach all you people how to dress.”

Even at Brooke, he color-coordinated his caps and sneakers.

“If something did not match, if your blue jeans were the wrong shade of blue, he would definitely let you know. He loved his clothes,” recalls Staff Sgt. Victor Dominguez, a burn patient who says German also inspired him with his positive outlook.

German also was something of an entrepreneur. Back in high school, he attended his senior prom, not with a date but a giant bag of disposable cameras to make some quick cash from those who didn’t have the foresight to bring their own.

At Brooke, he designed a T-shirt that he sometimes sold, sometimes gave away. On the front it read: “Got 3 percent chance of survival, what ya gonna do?” The back read, “A) Fight Through, b) Stay Strong, c) Overcome Because I Am a Warrior, d) All Of The Above.” D is circled.

Every time he cleared a hurdle, the staff at Brooke cheered him on.

When he first began walking, Guerra says, word spread in the hospital corridors. “People would say, ‘Did you know Merlin took his first step? Did you know he took 10 steps?’ “ she recalls.

German, in turn, was asked by hospital staff to motivate other burn patients when they were down or just not interested in therapy.

“I’d say, ‘Hey, can you talk to this patient?’ ... Merlin would come in ... and it was: Problem solved,” says Elder, the therapist. “The thing about him was there wasn’t anything in the burn world that he hadn’t been through. Nobody could say to him, ‘You don’t understand.’”

German understood, too, that burn patients deal with issues outside the hospital because of the way they look.

“When he saw a group of children in public, he was more concerned about what they might think,” says Renz, his surgeon. “He would work to make them comfortable with him.”

And kids adored him, including Elder’s two young sons. German had a habit of buying them toys with the loudest, most obnoxious sounds—and presenting them with a mischievous smile.

He especially loved his nieces and nephews; the feelings were mutual. One niece remembered him on a Web site as being “real cool and funny” and advising her to “forget about having little boyfriends and buying hot phones” and instead, concentrate on her education.

But he was closest to his mother. When the hospital’s Holiday Ball approached in 2006, German told Norma Guerra he wanted to surprise his mother by taking her for a twirl on the dance floor.

Guerra thought he was kidding. She knew it could be agony for him just to take a short walk or raise a scarred arm.

But she agreed to help, and they rehearsed for months, without his mother knowing. He chose a love song to be played for the dance: “Have I Told You Lately?” by Rod Stewart.

That night he donned his Marine dress blues and shiny black shoes—even though it hurt to wear them. When the time came, he took his mother in his arms and they glided across the dance floor.

Everyone stood and applauded. And everyone cried.

Clearly, it seemed, the courageous Marine was winning his long, hard battle.

“Some of the folks we lose—the fight to get better is too much,” Elder says. “But Merlin always came back. He had been through so much, but it was automatic. ... Merlin will be fine tomorrow. He’ll be back in the game. That’s what we always thought.”

■ ■ ■

Merlin German died after routine surgery to add skin under his lower lip.

He was already planning his next operations—on his wrists and elbows. But Renz also says with all the stress German’s body had been subjected to in recent years, “it was probably an unfair expectation that you can keep doing this over and over again and not have any problems.”

The cause of his death has not yet been determined.

“I may no more understand why he left us when he did than why he survived when he did,” Renz says. “I don’t think I was meant to know.”

As people learned of his death last month, they flocked to his hospital room to pay their last respects: Doctors, nurses, therapists and others, many arriving from home, kept coming as Friday night faded into Saturday morning.

Merlin German was just 22.

He had so many dreams that will go unrealized: Becoming an FBI agent (he liked the way they dressed). Going to college. Starting a business. Even writing comedy.

But he did accomplish one major goal: He set up a foundation for burned children called “Merlin’s Miracles,” to raise money so these kids could enjoy life, whether it was getting an air conditioner for their home or taking a trip to Disney World, a place he loved.

On a sunny April afternoon, German was buried among the giant oaks and Spanish moss of Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell. The chaplain remembered German as an indomitable Marine who never gave in to the enemy—or to his pain.

One by one, friends and family placed roses and carnations on his casket.

His parents put down the first flowers, then stepped aside for mourners. They were the last ones to leave his grave, his mother clutching a folded American flag.

■ ■ ■

Memorial Day is a time to remember the fallen with parades, tributes and stories.

Sgt. Joe Gonzales, a Marine liaison at Brooke, has a favorite story about Merlin German.

It was the day he and German’s mother were walking in the hospital hallway. German was ahead, wearing an iPod, seemingly oblivious to everyone else.

Suddenly, he did a sidestep.

For a second, Gonzales worried German was about to fall. But no.

“He just started dancing out of nowhere. His mom looked at me. She shook her head. There he was with a big old smile. Regardless of his situation, he was still trying to enjoy life.”

Life & Style

'Idol' David Cook ignores dating rules

NEW YORK (AP)—David Cook isn't a rules guy.

The newly crowned "American Idol" winner says he doesn't abide by the conventional three-day wait period after a date.

"I don't really believe in any sort of theories," the 25-year-old singer told The Associated Press on Thursday morning before performing on NBC's "Today" show. "I just kind of call when I call."

Which begs the question: Has he called—or texted—"Idol" alum Kimberly Caldwell? Cook said Tuesday on "Live With Regis and Kelly" that he recently had a dinner date with Caldwell, 26, who appeared on the second season of the top-rated Fox show. The verdict: he had a good time, and they'll "probably hang out again."

Two days later, surrounded by screaming fans outside Rockefeller Center, Cook responded diplomatically to a Caldwell question by the AP: "Great girl, we hung out and we'll see what happens."

AP

"American Idol" runner-up David Archuleta, left, and winner David Cook, appear on the NBC "Today" television program, in New York's Rockefeller Center Thursday May 29, 2008.

Cook, from Blue Springs, Mo., defeated 17-year-old David Archuleta last week in a landslide victory. The rocker/ex-bartender transformed into this season's heartthrob around the time he got rid of his unpopular (and unflattering) comb-forward haircut and grew facial scruff.

When asked if his in-season makeover contributed to his success, Cook said: "I don't really know. I think, you know, for me it was time to get a haircut. I forgot to shave one week. It's really all it is. ... I hope that at the end of the day, I did well on my own musical merit."

Cook and Archuleta, from Murray, Utah, each took the stage on the "Today" plaza. Signs in the audience read: "Cookie I am your oldest fan. `64.' Can I have a hug?" and "Life is betta with Archuleta." Someone yelled: "I'm missing school for you!"

Archuleta performed "Think of Me" from "The Phantom of the Opera." Cook crooned "The Time of My Life," which ranks third on Billboard's list of the "Hot 100" singles.

Archuleta, who has a penchant for socially conscious songs, said he hopes his post-"Idol" album will include music that's "fun and still has some meaning to it."

Cook said he'll begin recording his album (slated for release in the fall) this summer while crossing the country on the "American Idol's Live!" Tour. The tour, which features the show's top 10 contestants, kicks off July 1 in Glendale, Ariz., and ends in September in Tulsa, Okla.

"I'm gonna do like a calypso jazz fusion record," he joked. "No, I mean big surprise: my record will probably be a rock record."

Cook reaps 940,000 downloads

NEW YORK (AP)—David Cook's "American Idol" win is already paying dividends on the music charts. The 25-year-old singer raked in 942,000 digital downloads in just a week, according to figures released Thursday by Nielsen SoundScan. The numbers are from the week ending Sunday.

Runner-up on the Fox show, David Archuleta, amassed 323,000 downloads in the same period. The next closest "Idol" contender was Jason Castro, with 64,000 downloads.

Cook, from Blue Springs, Mo., last week defeated the 17-year-old Archuleta of Murray, Utah, by a margin of 12 million votes out of the record 97.5 million cast by viewers.

He wasn't the only one whose downloads jumped markedly. George Michael, Carrie Underwood and ZZ Top all saw huge increases in downloads after making guest appearances on the show.

Cook plans to release an album

BOOK REVIEW

What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception by Scott McClellan (PublicAffairs, $27.95, 342 pp.)

Reviewed by TIM RUTTEN

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Whatever qualities George W. Bush brought to the presidency, the ability to inspire loyalty in others obviously was not among them.

The evidence seems to suggest, in fact, that you probably would have to go back to the Borgia court to find anything close to the miasma of feral self-interest that must hang in the air during one of this administration's staff or Cabinet meetings. If you worked with this crew, you would want to wear a Kevlar undershirt to the office.

"What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception" by Scott McClellan—the second of Bush's four press secretaries—is the latest tell-all sensation in a series that actually began during the president's first term. Truth to tell, though, there's never been anything in presidential history quite like the stream of self-justifying memoirs this administration already has generated. Departed secretaries of State and Treasury have had their says, as has a director of Central Intelligence and an attorney general and assorted speech writers, political aides and the military commander of the Iraqi and Afghan invasions.

McClellan, who went to work for the then-governor of Texas when he was 30, is the first of Bush's Austin-based inner circle to turn on his former boss. Although his book doesn't formally go on sale until Monday, a week's worth of media reports have made its major allegations fairly well known. According to McClellan:

■ The president went to war against Iraq to secure his place in history and to spread democracy in the Middle East. Because he and his aides knew the case for war couldn't be sold to the American people on that basis, the president deliberately oversold and misrepresented intelligence on Saddam Hussein's links to international terrorism and his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction in what amounted to a "propaganda campaign."

■ Presidential political adviser Karl Rove and former vice presidential chief of staff I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby lied to McClellan about their roles in the Valerie Plame affair, leading him—in turn—to lie to the media.

■ Rove's influence led Bush to give politics primacy over policy, even when dealing with national security, and played a particularly strong role in the administration's abominable response to the destruction of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina.

■ Vice President Dick Cheney "always seemed to get his way" and "simply could not contain his deep seated certitude, even arrogance, to the detriment of the president."

The White House and its surrogates deny all this, stressing that as the deputy press secretary during the run-up to the war, McClellan wasn't in a position to have firsthand knowledge concerning some of the issues he discusses.

McClellan sheds interesting new light on the president's obviously pivotal relationship with former national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, whom the former press aide describes as "fully trusted and sometimes too accommodating." McClellan now decries her appointment as secretary of State because her predecessor, Colin L. Powell—whom the author clearly admires—acted as "a moderate voice to counter the more hawkish views of Cheney and Rumsfeld." Rice, according to McClellan, was charged with curbing the independence of the State Department bureaucracy, something Powell had declined to do.

More important, Rice had qualities that allowed her to survive and prosper in the claustrophobic emotional atmosphere that seems to have characterized the Bush White House. "Condi Rice," McClellan writes, "is hard to get to know. She plays her cards close to the vest, usually saving her views for private discussions with Bush. Over time, however, I was struck by how deft she is at protecting her reputation. No matter what went wrong, she was somehow able to keep her hands clean, even when the problems related to matters under her direct purview. ... And in private, she complemented and reinforced Bush's instincts rather than challenging or questioning them. As far as I could tell from internal meetings and discussions, Condi invariably fell in line with Bush's thinking."

If Rice has been Bush's closest adviser on national security and foreign affairs, as Rove has been his most intimate political adviser and Cheney his strongest overall influence, McClellan's up-close-and personal appraisal of the president's character looms even larger: "a leader unable to acknowledge that he got it wrong, and unwilling to grow in office by learning from his mistakes—too stubborn to change and grow." Although the author says he continues to regard Bush as basically a good and decent man—and rejects the suspicion that the chief executive simply is stupid—he does adjudge him incurious and utterly lacking in an inclination for reflection or self-scrutiny. He is, according to McClellan, particularly prone to denial and self-deception, personally insular and unable to acknowledge error for "fear of appearing weak."

McClellan, for example, recounts several instances during Bush's first presidential campaign during which the candidate virtually willed himself into forgetting incidents involving youthful cocaine and alcohol use that might have proved politically embarrassing. "Self-deceit is a human quality, and we all engage in it at times," the former press aide writes. "Bush is certainly not the first or the last politician to deceive himself, but the extent to which he resorts to self-deception beyond personal matters, which one can argue should be off-limits anyway, and the sincerity with which he embraces self-deluding beliefs amount to a personality trait that goes directly to larger issues of character and leadership style and carry over into real issues of governance."

Take a president with those traits—and McClellan, who has served Bush since his days in the Texas statehouse, seems entitled to a presumption of credibility on at least this score—and lock him in the Oval Office with the self-seeking, but sycophantic Rove-Rice-Cheney troika and any reasonable outsider would be entitled to conclude that they were seeing a disaster looking for a place to happen.

McClellan is hardly alone in his view that disaster is precisely what occurred in Iraq and New Orleans, as well as in several other venues. The novel ideas he brings to the historical postmortem already underway are the notions that a supine media and what he rather unoriginally calls Washington's atmosphere of permanent campaign played critical roles in those failures.

He should be granted part of the point on the press—though only part. The news media, no less than the nation, endured a wrenching trauma on 9/11 and no less than any other institution in society felt the moral obligation to demonstrate solidarity with a country under deadly threat. In that situation, not giving the administration the benefit of the doubt, when it presented "facts" it said were based on the best and most sensitive intelligence available from the CIA and other spy agencies, would have been mindlessly adversarial. Moreover, since the media lacked the ability to do original reporting on the ground in Iraq, what basis would there have been for contradicting the administration's assessment of Saddam's aims?

Where the media failed badly was in the way a handful of high-profile reporters accepted leaks of the most sensational alleged intelligence and breathlessly went with them, thereby making it harder to critically evaluate the case the White House was making from its "facts."

As far as the villainous effect of the permanent campaign—by which one presumes McClellan means politics—goes, suffice to say that Washington has been coping with its political demands for at least a generation now and, never before, did it impel an administration to take the country into an "unnecessary war."

At one point McClellan writes that he undertook his confessional memoir, in part, to square his conscience with his Christianity. Even so, "the devil made me do it" just won't wash as an explanation for this administration's eight years of misgovernment.

AP

In this May 22, 2008 file photo, American actress Sharon Stone speaks, during the amfAR's annual Cinema Against AIDS 2008 benefit in Mougins, southern France.

Sharon Stone sorry for China remark

BEIJING (AP)—French fashion house Christian Dior said Thursday it has dropped Sharon Stone from its Chinese ads and released a statement from the actress apologizing for saying China's earthquake may have been bad karma for its treatment of Tibet.

The 50-year-old actress said she was "deeply sorry" for causing anguish and anger among Chinese people with her remarks in an interview last week. Stone models for Christian Dior SA, and the company's Shanghai office issued the statement.

Stone's comments caused considerable anger in the Chinese media. The official Xinhua News Agency said in a commentary Thursday she was the "public enemy of all mankind."

The public relations manager for Dior in Shanghai who gave only her surname, Guo, said Stone would no longer appear in the company's advertisements in China.

"Due to my inappropriate words and acts during the interview, I feel deeply sorry and sad about hurting Chinese people," Stone said in the statement. "I am willing to take part in the relief work of China's earthquake, and wholly devote myself to helping affected Chinese people."

Chinese media have erupted in indignation over foreign criticism of the country ahead of the Beijing Olympics in August. During the international leg of the Olympic torch relay, many Chinese reacted strongly to protests over China's rule of Tibet.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said Thursday he had taken note of Stone's apology.

"We hope that as an actress she should contribute to our two peoples' mutual trust, understanding and friendship," he said.

Stone's original comments were made last week during a Cannes Film Festival red-carpet interview.

"I'm not happy about the way the Chinese are treating the Tibetans because I don't think anyone should be unkind to anyone else," Stone said. "And then this earthquake and all this stuff happened, and then I thought, is that karma? When you're not nice that the bad things happen to you?"

Judge: Reporter must testify at R. Kelly trial

R. Kelly

CHICAGO (AP)—A Chicago Sun-Times reporter must testify at R. Kelly's child pornography trial.

Judge Vincent Gaughan (GAWN) made that ruling Friday.

The defense wants to call Jim DeRogatis (day-roh-GAH'-tus) to ask how he got a sex tape in 2002 that's now the center of the trial.

The judge rejected arguments from a lawyer for the Sun-Times that DeRogatis' actions should be privileged under the First Amendment.

The singer has pleaded not guilty to child pornography charges.

The trial resumes Monday.

Glasses join the style parade

By JOSEPH V. AMODIO
SPECIAL TO NEWSDAY

GREAT NECK, N.Y.—Philip Meltzer is an optometrist. Some days, he's also a marriage counselor.

Occasionally customers return glasses because their husbands or wives hate them, says Meltzer, owner of Spectacles in Great Neck.

He'll usually take them back, suggesting the client return with spouse in tow. If they get the choice down to two, Meltzer advises they go with the spouse's pick—since that's who has to look at them the most.

Buying glasses can be prickly business for the nearly 171 million American adults who, according to the Vision Council of America, wear some form of corrective lenses—eyeglasses, contacts or reading glasses. The good news: There are more choices than ever before. Eyewear, in fact, has become the hot, new accessory.

We're in something of an ophthalmological moment, with more and more brands launching eyewear lines (including Cole-Haan, Carmen Marc Valvo, Jimmy Choo, Tiffany and Pucci), and designers (like Valvo and Michael Kors) dressing models in frames in recent runway shows.

Stars, too—Chloe Sevigny, Jennifer Garner, Johnny Depp, even "Speed Racer's" Emile Hirsch—are popping up bespectacled in the pages of magazines and gossip columns. "Saturday Night Live" alum Tina Fey became a smart-girl sex symbol with her specs. And "American Idol" judge Randy Jackson is so identified with his angular frames he launched his own line this spring.

"My eyewear is a part of my look and personality," says Jackson. "Eyeglasses aren't only for seeing, but for looking good. The days of being called 'four eyes' are out."

"I attribute it to the political atmosphere today," says Robert Marc, a designer of sleek, upscale frames. "With the upcoming elections and debates about the economy, the environment and the war, everyone wants to look cerebral and 'in the know.'"

Glasses can also express one's style and creativity. "Eyewear is the new scarf, the new tie," notes trend consultant Tom Julian, of the Tom Julian Group in Manhattan. "Think left brain/right brain—if a purse or watch used to do a power thing, glasses do the creative thing." Technology, too, he adds, "has helped spur interest in frames."

Advances in laminates allow for saturated, bold colors; lasers cut out or etch intricate designs on temples; and jewels and crystals offer bling.

And that's just frames. Lens technology also continues to improve.

"It's like digital cameras," says Kevin Palmer, owner of Main Street Optics in Southampton. "Two or three megapixels used to be a big deal, now 10 seem standard." Today's lenses, he explains, are ultra thin, offering consumers more choice in the kinds of frames they can wear.

So, which do you choose? Rectangles remain strong, say opticians. Bold colors and shapes are hot, and a retro look is on the rise.

"Nostalgic baby boomers," says Marc, are driving sales of old-school glasses—thick, round and square frames reminiscent of the 1950s and '60s.

"Call it the 'Mad Men' factor," says Julian.

For men, mad or not, tortoise and black are the norm, notes Meltzer. Women are more likely to experiment with color, and tend to do well with modified cat's-eyes turned up slightly at the ends, he says. "It gives a bit of a face-lift." Sold!

The good news: There are more choices than ever before. Eyewear, in fact, has become the hot, new accessory.

PICK THE RIGHT SHAPE

"Frame shapes should contrast with your face shape, creating a balance of angles and curves," says designer Robert Marc.

If your face is:

Oval: Lucky you. Almost any frame shape, if in proportion, should work.

Long, thin: Go for a slightly wider frame.

Round: Angular frames add structure and "have a slimming effect," says Marc.

Square: Soft, horizontal frames offset an angled jaw line.

Heart-shaped: Bow-tie or almond-shaped frames balance the look. ***(Newsday)***

Charity recycles glasses

For more than 80 years, Lions Clubs have recycled glasses —cleaning, classifying and distributing them around the world. Children's glasses are especially needed.

For information, go to www.lionsclubs.org. You also can drop off used eyewear at LensCrafters, Pearle Vision, Sears Optical, Target Optical or Sunglass Hut locations, to be distributed to those in need by www.givethegiftofsight.org. ***(Newsday)***

Coppola movie resumes in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) -- Francis Ford Coppola resumed shooting his latest film Thursday after a six-day hiatus prompted by a labor complaint from the actors' union, the organization's director said. But Coppola's spokeswoman, Kathleen Talbert, disputed the information, saying in an e-mail to The Associated Press that the production "was never shut down by the union and has shot every day that was scheduled."

Argentine Association of Actors spokesman Daniel Valenzuela told the AP last week that the five-time Oscar winner, who directed "Apocalypse Now" and "The Godfather" trilogy, was forced to suspend shooting "Tetro" May 22 because of complaints from the union. The association claimed that his production studio had not presented the necessary paperwork for Argentine actors involved in the movie.

"The problem is solved," Association head Norberto Gonzalo said Thursday. "The production company has presented all the required documents and begun shooting again."

"Tetro," which deals with the struggles of an Italian family in Argentina, is in its ninth week of shooting in Buenos Aires. It's scheduled for release in spring 2009.

The Argentina-based segment of the movie will conclude in June, after which it will move to Spain.

Rumor of Jolie twins being born belied

CORRENS, France (AP)—The Brangelina clan began settling into their new home in the south of France as a report that Angelina Jolie's twins had been born was denied by Brad Pitt's manager.

"Entertainment Tonight" first reported on its Web site Friday that the actress had given birth in France. The TV show stood by its story Friday night, with host Mary Hart saying on the air that "just this morning, a source who says she was inside the delivery room tells us yes, the babies were born and yes, mother and babies are fine."

Pitt's manager, Cynthia Pett-Dante, told The Associated Press: "We have no comment except the story is not true."

Several celebrity news outlets also reported the story was false. A spokeswoman for "Entertainment Tonight" did not return a call for comment Friday.

Jolie has said previously that her twins are due in August. She and Pitt have four other children: 6-year-old Maddox, 4-year-old Pax and 3-year-old Zahara, who are adopted, and 2-year-old Shiloh.

In southern France, where locals say the couple recently moved, officials at the Etoile Maternite Catholique de Provence in Aix-en-Provence, one of the region's top maternity clinics, said that Jolie had not been there and did not appear scheduled to come.

Privacy rules about health matters are extremely strict in France.

The pair recently moved into the Miraval Estate villa in the French hamlet of Correns, in the Provence region, according to the mayor and a local inn owner.

Traditionally, the region has lured tourists mostly for rock-climbing excursions on the rolling hills of the verdant region and leisurely strolls in its quaint medieval villages.

Mayor Michael Latz trumpets Correns as France's first town where all locally grown produce is organic—and his villagers teem with pride about that reputation, and seem mostly bemused about the invasion of Hollywood buzz.

"I like to joke that I'm happy to be able to contribute to the image of Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt, because Correns is so well known," Mayor Michael Latz said with a smile outside the ochre-colored town hall.

Latz said that Tom Bove, an American businessman who owns Miraval, recently told him that Jolie and Pitt had agreed to a three-year lease on the property, known for producing high-quality organic wine.

The couple is "in the process of moving in," said Latz, adding that he hadn't met them and knew nothing about whether Jolie had given birth or not.

"They are people who I hope will live normally here," he said. "I would think the choice of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie ... is tied to the quality of life in Correns."

Latz also rejected speculation about an imminent wedding, and said that under French law they'd need to alert local authorities if they want to officially tie the knot here.

Security guards were blocking the gates to the estate Friday, while a postal truck and other maintenance vehicles regularly passed in and out. The castle and accompanying buildings can't be seen from public roads.

Onno Stijl, owner of the L'Auberge du Parc inn, said it was a good thing they were moving in and could help business. He said he gets his wine from the estate's vineyards.

"It's a couple living here now like everyone," he said.

The area, he said, "is a bit isolated but that gives it a certain ... privacy."

According to its Web site, the Miraval estate dates from pre-Roman times. It includes fountains, aqueducts, moats, a lake and vineyards that produce an organic wine distributed worldwide.

Pitt and Jolie may be Miraval's first movie stars in residence, but Miraval has seen its share of rock stars. The estate includes a studio which has hosted the likes of Sting, the Cranberries and Pink Floyd, who recorded tracks for "The Wall" album there.

In this May 15, 2008 file photo, U.S. actors Brad Pitt, left, and Angelina Jolie arrive for the premiere of the film "Kung Fu Panda," during the 61st International film festival in Cannes, France.

AP

Winehouse late for first post-rehab concert

LISBON, Portugal (AP)—Amy Winehouse showed up late for her first concert since leaving rehab, giving an underwhelming performance in front of 90,000 people Friday at a Lisbon music festival.

The Grammy-winning jazz-pop diva turned up almost an hour late for the outdoor show. She apologized for having a sore throat, and her voice cracked during the 55-minute set.

Winehouse, wearing a short dress, appeared distracted during her performance. She paused to talk to members of her band, fiddled at length with her microphone, sucked throat candy and at one point dashed offstage but quickly returned.

She had cuts on her left arm, and her right hand was bandaged.

Winehouse's musical career has flourished despite her erratic behavior, missed concerts and stints in drug rehab.

"Hey Lisbon," Winehouse told the crowd, which had booed when she failed to show up on time. "I'm sorry I'm late," she said.

The sell-out crowd, gathered in a park for the Rock in Rio festival, warmed to Winehouse as the 24-year-old sang hits including her breakthrough song "Rehab," soul classics and reggae songs.

The crowd wasn't thoroughly thrilled, though, and she walked off stage without playing an encore. The crowd remained subdued.

Winehouse was the third act of the day on the festival's main stage, coming on before headliner Lenny Kravitz.

Winehouse's management told the festival organizers she would not speak to the media.

AP

Jazz Soul diva Amy Winehouse, from England, has a drink while performing to 90,000 spectators on the main stage of the Rock in Rio Lisboa music festival at the Bela Vista Park Friday, May 30, 2008, Portugal.

The singer is booked to play at a series of music festivals in Europe this summer. She said she is set to perform next month at a concert in London honoring Nelson Mandela.

Last week she won an Ivor Novello award, a prestigious British prize, for "Love Is a Losing Game" from her "Back to Black" album. Her father received the prize after Winehouse arrived late to the ceremony.

Earlier this month, the singer was arrested and questioned by police about video footage that appeared to show her inhaling fumes from a crack pipe. Authorities said the singer would not be charged.

Last year she canceled a series of British concerts and postponed a tour of the U.S. and Canada after British media reported that she was in and out of rehab.

Home at center of 50 Cent lawsuit is destroyed by fire

DIX HILLS, N.Y. (AP)—A multimillion-dollar home at the center of a bitter dispute between 50 Cent and the mother of his son was destroyed by a suspicious fire early Friday.

Six people, including 50's ex-girlfriend Shaniqua Tompkins and their 10-year-old son, Marquise, were taken to a hospital after suffering smoke inhalation and later released. A firefighter also suffered a minor eye injury, officials said.

50, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, doesn't live in the home and wasn't there at the time.

"Informed this morning while filming a new motion picture on location in Louisiana, Curtis Jackson expressed deep concern over this fire at his property," a representative for 50 said in a statement. "He is extremely thankful that everyone including his son, Marquise, escaped the burning house safely. He is confident that authorities will be conducting a thorough investigation of the incident and is eager to review their findings."

50 Cent

The home was essentially burned to the ground, with charred embers and wreckage littering the lot where the home once stood in the tree-lined neighborhood in Dix Hills.

Investigators from the Suffolk County arson squad were called to the scene after Dix Hills Fire Chief Larry Feld deemed the blaze suspicious. The fire was reported at 4:59 a.m. and was extinguished about 45 minutes later, Feld said. The arson squad had finished its work at the scene six hours after the blaze.

Subject of 'Lorenzo's Oil' dies at 30

WASHINGTON (AP)—The man whose parents' battle to save him from a nerve disease was depicted in the movie "Lorenzo's Oil" died Friday at his home in Virginia, having lived more than 20 years longer than doctors had predicted.

Lorenzo Odone, who doctors had predicted would die in childhood, died one day after his 30th birthday, said his father, Augusto Odone.

Lorenzo Odone had come down with aspiration pneumonia recently after getting food stuck in his lungs, his father said. He began bleeding heavily, and before an ambulance reached their home his son was dead, Odone said.

"He could not see or communicate, but he was still with us," Odone said Friday. "He did not suffer. ... That's the important thing."

Odone was found at age 6 to have adrenoleukodystrophy, or ALD. His doctors told his parents the disease - caused by a genetic mutation that causes the neurological system to break down - would lead to death in two years.

The disease leads to the accumulation of substances called very long chain fatty acids in cells, which damages the material that coats nerve fibers in the brain.

Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte starred as Michaela and Augusto Odone in 1992's "Lorenzo's Oil," which recounted their efforts to formulate the oil they said helped their son fight the neurological disease, despite lacking scientific backgrounds.

Charlie Sheen, Brooke Mueller marry

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The star of "Two and a Half Men" has moved on to marriage No. 3.

Charlie Sheen tied the knot with fiancee Brooke Mueller Friday night, said publicist Stan Rosenfield, who declined to give more details.

The 42-year-old actor and Mueller, a real estate investor, have been engaged since last summer.

"She's just easy, and loving, and smart, and if everybody was just as happy to see me when I walk through a door as her, my life would be perfect," he said soon after the couple got engaged.

Sheen married Denise Richards in 2002. They divorced in 2006 and have been embroiled in a bitter custody battle over their two young daughters. Richards stars in the new reality show "Denise Richards: It's Complicated" on E!

Sheen briefly married model Donna Peele in 1995, and announced plans to divorce her about six months into their union.

Sheen has appeared in several movies, and currently stars in the CBS comedy "Two and a Half Men."

AP

Actor Charlie Sheen and Brooke Mueller arrive at the 59th Primetime Emmy Awards Sunday, Sept. 16, 2007, at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

Monroe film is up for auction

Want a behind-the-scenes look at the set of Marilyn Monroe's last fully produced feature? Better call the bank.

Two reels of silent, 8-millimeter color film titled "On Set With 'The Misfits'" is going on the auction block, with bids starting between $10,000 and $20,000. Julien's Auctions is listing the 47-minute film next month at Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino in Las Vegas.

According to the Julien's Auctions Web site, it's the original film by amateur photographer Stanley Floyd Kilarr, who shot scenes of the stars and crew during the making of "The Misfits"—the final completed film for both its stars, Monroe and Clark Gable.

Gable had a fourth heart attack just after filming was finished, and died Nov. 16, 1960, some two months before the movie's U.S. release. Monroe died Aug. 5, 1962.

Kilarr was part of the "Misfits" crew and shot his own film throughout production. "On Set With 'The Misfits'" features candid moments with Monroe and Gable, as well as Montgomery Clift, Thelma Ritter and director John Huston. The video shows the actors preparing for scenes, chatting with crew members and others on the set, and relaxing between takes. ***(AP)***

No felony charges vs Farina

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles County prosecutors won't file felony charges against actor Dennis Farina for having a gun in his luggage at an airport earlier this month.

Farina was arrested for investigation of carrying a concealed weapon.

Jane Robison, a spokeswoman for the district attorney's office, said Friday there wasn't enough evidence to charge Farina with a felony.

Instead, the case was referred to the city attorney's office, which will decide whether to file misdemeanor charges that carry a lighter sentence.

Farina has said he forgot the weapon was there.

In this May 1, 2008 file photo, Dennis Farina arrives for the premiere of "What Happens in Vegas" in Los Angeles.

AP

Condoleezza enlists in Kiss Army fan club

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)—The Kiss Army fan club has an enthusiastic new recruit: Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Rice was in the Swedish capital Thursday for an international conference on Iraq. Kiss had a sold-out concert to play Friday.

"I was thrilled," Rice said of her late-night encounter with Kiss frontman Gene Simmons and bandmates Paul Stanley, Eric Singer and Tommy Thayer in the executive lounge of the Sheraton Hotel where they signed autographs and handed out backstage passes and T-shirts to her staff.

"It was really fun to meet Kiss and Gene Simmons," she told reporters, noting that they seemed well-informed about current events. The band had asked if she could stop by after she finished dinner with the Swedish foreign minister and Rice readily agreed, she said.

Rice, a classically trained pianist, said she has eclectic musical tastes ranging from Beethoven to Bruce Springsteen.

Hard rockers such as Kiss are included in the mix, and Rice said her favorite Kiss tune is "Rock and Roll All Nite."

But, Rice conceded, she has never seen the band in concert.

Publisher offers 5K more books for Kindle

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Amazon.com said Friday that publisher Simon & Schuster Inc. will make 5,000 more books available for the Amazon Kindle wireless reader, bumping to 125,000 the number of titles users can download and read.

Later in the day, Amazon.com Inc. Chief Executive Jeff Bezos appeared at the BookExpo America convention in Los Angeles and touted the benefits of electronic book offerings.

He said Amazon had temporarily sold out of hard copies of "What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception," the new tell-all book by former White House press secretary Scott McClellan.

It's still available, however, for electronic downloading, Bezos said.

"That's one of the great things about electronic books," he said. "They don't go out of stock."

Bezos has said Kindle e-books now account for 6 percent of sales among the 125,000 titles available on the site in both electronic and print formats. The company did not elaborate on that figure.

The online retailer cut the Kindle's price by $40 to $359 on Tuesday but still won't say how many have sold. The company also refuses to divulge the total number of e-books it has sold.

Kindle launched last November and sold out in hours. Amazon sorted out its supply chain and manufacturing problems, and the device was back on sale in April.

Despite the price cut, the Kindle still costs more than Sony Corp.'s competing Reader, which retails for $299.

Family flees violent husband as well as helpless relatives

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My children and I were living with a maniac who threatened to kill me if I took the kids and ran. We reached out to his family, hoping they would intervene and tell him they knew what he was doing to us. We wanted someone to stand up to him.

His sister said: "I don't want to hear this. I love my brother. I don't want to think about him doing these things, so don't tell me these stories!"

His father said, "What did you do to provoke him?"

His brother and his wife were sympathetic, but said there was nothing they could do.

The last violent episode ended with the children and me locking ourselves in the bathroom while my husband screamed and tried to break the door down for half an hour. When he finally stopped, I called his dad who said, "Do you know what time it is? You woke me up!" He hung up the phone so fast I didn't get to tell him what his son had done to our autistic son.

After getting help from outside sources, we finally felt safe enough to leave. We're now divorced, and my daughter wants nothing to do with her father's side of the family. Her granddad can't figure out why she won't talk to him, and her aunt has no clue why my daughter refuses to visit.

Abby, please urge family members to step up to the plate. Be supportive and ask what you can do to help. Lives could be saved in the process, in more ways than one.

HEARTBREAK IN THE HEARTLAND

DEAR HEARTBREAK: I'm doing as you requested, but if your husband didn't suffer from severe mental problems, he probably learned his abusive ways from his own father, while his sister grew up in denial about her family's dysfunction, and his brother was trained to feel "helpless."

I'm pleased you were finally able to take control of your lives and get out of there. Now please, teach your daughter a lesson in assertiveness. Tell her she has nothing to gain by remaining silent, and she should tell her grandfather why she no longer talks to him, and her aunt why she no longer wants her in her life. Doing so will make her stronger.

▪ ▪ ▪ ▪

DEAR ABBY: We recently moved into our dream house. We bought it from an elderly man who had lived there alone after his wife died seven years ago.

While exploring the property, we found a small gravestone with the name "Sparkle" engraved on it. We assume this was a former pet of the owner, but he never mentioned it to us.

Some of us want to dig it up and see what is really buried there. Others think we should just remove the stone. Or should we let it stay where it is?

UNSETTLED IN ALTOONA

DEAR UNSETTLED: Take a vote. If the majority thinks the old man might have "forgotten" the family jewels, then see what's down there. But be prepared to find nothing more than the moldering remains of a beloved family pet.

Personally, I vote for leaving things as they are—unless you're planning on re-landscaping the property, in which case you could remove the stone and let Sparkle continue to R.I.P.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

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Pierce, Celtics beat Pistons to reach NBA finals

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. (AP)—The Boston Celtics got past an old nemesis to set up an NBA finals matchup with another rival—the Los Angeles Lakers.

Paul Pierce scored 27 points, Ray Allen had 17 and Kevin Garnett added 16 to lift Boston to an 89-81 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Friday night in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals.

Boston, which locked up with Detroit many times in the 1980s, will now rekindle another classic series in the NBA finals against the Los Angeles Lakers.

"It's kind of surreal," Garnett said.

The Celtics are in the NBA finals for the first since losing to the Lakers in 1987, the third meeting in a four-year span.

The Pistons were eliminated on their home court for the first time during a six-year run that included a trip to the conference finals each year and the 2004 title.

Boston entered the series without a road win in the postseason, then beat Detroit on its home court twice to win the grueling series.

After playing two Game 7s, the Celtics will get a needed break before hosting Kobe Bryant and the Lakers on Thursday night.

"We're emotionally drained," Garnett said.

Chauncey Billups scored a playoff-high 29 points and Richard Hamilton had 21, but the rest of their teammates had lackluster efforts—especially Rasheed Wallace.

At one point Billups had 21 points, matching the total for the rest of the team.

Wallace scored just four points on 2-of-12 shooting and had three turnovers in what might've been his last game as a Piston and could've been Flip Saunders' last as Detroit's coach. President of basketball operations Joe Dumars will likely make some sort of changes on the bench, the court or both.

"I'm sure that's something Joe and I will sit down and evaluate," Saunders said.

After it was 58-all, Detroit closed the third quarter with a 10-2 run and took its first lead since midway through the opening quarter.

Just when it seemed the Pistons might be in control with a 70-60 lead early in the fourth, the Celtics scored nine points in less than 2 minutes and went on a 19-4 run that put them ahead 79-74.

Billups' three-point play pulled Detroit to 83-79 with 2:24 left, then the Pistons wasted a chance to get closer.

Tayshaun Prince grabbed a loose ball after a Boston miss and turned the ball over when James Posey surprised him from behind and snatched it away.

Pierce made two free throws on the possession, putting the Celtics up by six with 1 1/2 minutes to go.

"It was the best fourth quarter we played all playoff long," Pierce said.

The Pistons failed on their 3-pointers down the stretch and couldn't take advantage of Garnett missing two free throws with 36 seconds left.

The Pistons were eliminated at home for the first time since Pierce helped Boston do it in the second round of the 2002 playoffs. Detroit had won its previous five games this postseason when coming off a loss.

AP

Boston Celtics forward Paul Pierce (34) hugs coach Doc Rivers after the Celtics defeated the Detroit Pistons 89-81 to win the NBA basketball Eastern Conference finals in Auburn Hills, Mich., Friday, May 30, 2008.

Detroit lost Game 6 of the conference finals for the third straight year and with only one title and two NBA finals appearances during its impressive six-year run, the franchise will draw more comparisons to baseball's Atlanta Braves.

The Celtics, meanwhile, validated their bold move of adding Garnett and Allen to Pierce to form a Big Three. They played key roles in the decisive fourth quarter, helping Boston outscore Detroit 29-13.

Boston point guard Rajon Rondo scored 11 points and Kendrick Perkins added seven points and seven rebounds.

Unlike early games in the series, neither team jumped out to a big lead in the opening minutes.

Boston led 24-21 after five lead changes—the last coming at the 6:12 mark—and a tie in the first quarter and a negated shot.

Pistons rookie Rodney Stuckey made a jumper late in the quarter, but it was waved off after a video review showed the ball in his hand when the shot clock expired.

Allen and Hamilton, in a matchup of Connecticut greats, had 10 points apiece in the first quarter to lead both teams.

After the Celtics went ahead by seven, Billups made a 3-pointer and later a free throw to pull Detroit within a point.

Garnett then went to the bench with three fouls and 3:11 left in the first half, and seldom-used reserve Leon Powe replaced him and matched the superstar's point total of four points to help Boston lead 40-37 at halftime.

Garnett opened the game by making his first two shots, then missed his final eight attempts in the first half.

Both teams had two starters making shots and three putting up bricks.

Billups and Hamilton were a combined 11-of-19, while the other three starters were 1-for-12. Wallace and Prince missed all five of their shots.

Allen and Pierce combined to go 9-of-15. The rest of the starters were 5-for-21.

Garnett and Prince both ended their skids by making jumpers early in the second half.

Prince scored nine points in the third to help Detroit score 31 in the quarter after being held to just 37 in the first half.

Antonio McDyess made two free throws with 3 minutes left in the third quarter to put Detroit ahead as part of a 22-6 run that gave it a 10-point cushion early in the fourth.

Goggin, Perry reach the top different ways

DUBLIN, Ohio (AP)—The first sign of hope at the Memorial came from the scoreboard, which showed Mathew Goggin coming back to the pack after a blazing start. The second sign came from a gray sky that promised relief from a brutal test of golf.

Goggin birdied four of the first five holes before strapping in for a wild ride of birdies and bogeys that ultimately added up to an even-par 72 that tied him for the lead with two-time champion Kenny Perry, who recovered from a rugged start for a 71.

They were at 7-under 137, one shot clear of Jerry Kelly.

All those scores seemed so much lower on a Muirfield Village course that felt like a major with its ankle-deep rough that swallowed up errant shots and greens as slick as glass.

Only three players broke 70 on Friday, with Johnson Wagner turning in a remarkable 67. Twenty players couldn't break 80.

The U.S. Open starts in two weeks in San Diego, but Joe Ogilvie came up with an environmentally friendly plan. He suggested the second major be contested at Muirfield, so players wouldn't have to travel as far in their private jets.

"You'd save millions of pounds of carbon dioxide in the air, and golf would be a green sport again," Ogilvie said after a 75. "All they have to do is change out the pins, replace the rakes and take away press parking."

Goggin is the 36-hole leader for the first time on the PGA Tour, and part of him wishes he had it alone. He was bogey-free through seven holes, but then made only two pars the rest of the way. Three straight bogeys preceded a birdie, and he followed that with a double bogey into the water at No. 12, then two more birdies.

"I had seven birdies today, so that was the same," Goggin said, alluding to his 65 in the opening round. "The five bogeys and a double, well, that was probably a negative."

Perry knows all about the latter. He faced the brunt of the wind, and it showed when he bogeyed three of his first five holes, slipping down the leaderboard with so many others. But on the par-5 15th, he hooked a 3-wood into the gallery—a good place to miss because the pin was to the right—then watched his chip from the hill tumble into the cup on its last turn for eagle.

"Hit the shot of my life to keep the ship from sinking," he said.

A birdie on the par-3 eighth allowed him to salvage a 71 and a share of the lead. But the 47-year-old Perry sure didn't look like he had just played a round of golf on a beautiful course.

"I'm tired," he said. "I'm mentally tired right now. That was a very stressful round to try to hang in there and keep it together. I hope that Saturday and Sunday, the weather will cooperate a little bit and not be as dicey out there."

Help might be on the way, with rain in the forecast. Tee times were pushed back for the third round because course officials expect to need extra time in the morning to get the course ready.

Phil Mickelson chopped his way to a 75 and was 10 shots behind. He was 35 feet behind the hole in two on the par-5 11th and rarely felt so hopeless with a wedge in his hand, given how badly his ball was buried. He hacked through the grass and watched his ball roll through the green into more rough, making him work for a par.

Someone asked him if he had a chance to win.

"Did you see I was 10 back?" he replied. "I don't know if you saw that. I need some rough weather so the scores don't go too low, and they've got to play a great round."

At least he has a chance.

Ernie Els waffled on his decision to come to Ohio, flying over at the last minute and leaving just as quickly. He shot a 43 on the front nine, made eight pars and a birdie on the back and shot 78 to miss the cut by one shot.

The cut was 6-over 150, the highest at the Memorial since 1989, the year 40 mph gusts were accompanied by temperatures in the 50s. It was pleasantly warm Friday, and the gusts were only about 20 mph, but that was more than enough to punish anyone slightly off his game.

Sergio Garcia, coming off his victory in The Players Championship, was going along nicely until he chunked a shot out of the rough and into the water on the 14th, missed a 4-foot putt and took double bogey. That was the start of him playing the final five holes in 5 over for a 77, leaving him a dozen shots behind.

Goggin took only nine putts on his final nine holes Thursday, and he kept right on going. He chipped in for birdie on the first hole, then holed a 35-footer on the second and a mere 10-footer on the third. That good start allowed him to keep some perspective when it got ugly.

"Having seven birdies and you shoot even par, you're probably disappointed," he said. "But the way the round went through the middle and coming back and then dropping back, it's still pretty satisfying. And you're still around the lead. So that's all you can ask for."

Luke Donald had a 71 in the afternoon and was at 5-under 139, while former U.S. Open champion Geoff Ogilvy had a 69 in the morning and was in the group at 140.

There was plenty of muttering about the thick rough, which might be as deep as it gets all year, and the slick greens, which might be as fast as players see all year. But those atop the leaderboard figured out a way to score.

"It tests your short game, tests your mental game," Justin Rose said after a 73 left him four behind. "That's what golf's all about."

Serena, Venus Williams lose in 3rd round at French

PARIS (AP)—Oracene Price, mother and coach to Venus and Serena Williams, stood near the steps to the locker room at the end of a long, rough day at the French Open.

First she watched eight-time major champion Serena lose a match that began a little after 11 a.m. Then she watched six-time major champion Venus lose a match that ended in near-darkness, shortly before 10 p.m. Both sisters were stunned in the third round Friday by journeywomen who never have been quarterfinalists, much less champions, at any Grand Slam tournament.

As Price consulted another daughter about the best way to leave the grounds, she paused for a moment, distracted by someone bounding up the stairs, two at a time. It was Flavia Pennetta, the Italian seeded 26th who beat Venus 7-5, 6-3, and was headed toward her parents for hugs and kisses and a congratulatory call from Grandma.

"Did you see the match? Did you see the match?" Pennetta shouted loudly enough to be heard back home in Brindisi, at the heel of Italy's boot, without the help of a cell phone. "Don't cry!"

For days leading to these matching upsets, the Williams clan spoke—presciently, it turns out—about how tough it can be to play against less-heralded opponents who want to make their mark by beating one sister or the other.

"They just have to learn how to do the rope-a-dope as they get older," Price said after Serena's 6-4, 6-4 loss to No. 27 Katarina Srebotnik of Slovenia.

It was clear from listening to Pennetta and Srebotnik that they were thinking exactly what the women they beat figured.

"Today, I woke up and, you know, it was just another opportunity. This is what you work so hard for—to be in third round where you play Serena or someone like that and you have really nothing to lose," said Srebotnik, who managed to reach the fourth round at a major only once before in 35 tries.

"If you win a match like that, you gain a lot, so I just took my chances."

Not only was there nary a Williams left in the French Open, there were no U.S. women left at all, because Bethanie Mattek was beaten 6-2, 3-6, 6-2 by No. 1 Maria Sharapova, whose 10 double-faults raised her total to 27 through two matches. It's the first time in at least 40 years the United States didn't put at least one woman into the fourth round at Roland Garros.

Heading into Saturday there was a solitary American in Paris: Robby Ginepri, the last of 10 U.S. men in the original draw after Wayne Odesnik lost to No. 3 Novak Djokovic in straight sets. Ginepri plays Florent Serra of France in the third round.

Friday's surprises also mean there will be a first-time French Open women's champion. Serena, who beat Venus in the 2002 final, was the only past winner entered.

If Srebotnik befuddled Serena by repeatedly changing angles and speeds, Pennetta took a more unorthodox path to beating a Williams, hanging with Venus through long baseline exchanges. In the second set, as the light faded, Pennetta won seven of the 10 points that lasted 10 or more strokes.

"I played a complete match in every way," said Pennetta, who lost in the first or second round in 14 of her previous 20 Grand Slam appearances.

There are no lights at Roland Garros, and a player has the right to request that a match be suspended because of darkness. A match between No. 3 Jelena Jankovic and No. 28 Dominika Cibulkova played simultaneously on another show court was halted in the second set—before Pennetta-Williams finished—and will resume Saturday.

Asked why she did not request the chair umpire to stop play, Venus said: "Because I didn't."

Serena, meanwhile, went only 1-for-7 on break points, including 0-for-5 in the second set. She also lost 14 of the 21 points when she went to the net, thanks to some poor approach shots, shoddy volleying and four passing winners off Srebotnik's racket.

"Once the ball was in the rally I kind of saw it big, and I could pick a spot," Srebotnik said.

She repeatedly showed resolve, including while serving out the first set at 5-4.

Serena saved three set points there, but then set up a fourth when she ended a 14-stroke exchange by shanking a backhand volley several feet wide of the doubles alley. Serena put a palm up, then put her racket head-down on the court and leaned her forehand on the end of the handle, a vision of exasperation.

On the next point, Serena weakly put a backhand into the net, ending the set.

"I mean, to be honest, she did help me," Srebotnik said.

The second set saw more of the same: Srebotnik mixing speeds, and Serena flubbing shots she usually puts away. Ahead 2-1, Serena earned two break points, wasting each with a forehand into the net. Ahead 3-2, she earned two more, but missed a backhand return then drove a forehand into the net.

Serena had her last break chance at 4-3, and she gave it away by badly missing a drop shot. She tugged the brim of her beige ballcap low over her eyes, perhaps trying to hide the disappointment.

Srebotnik won the next point with a volley winner, then watched Serena be her own worst enemy again. Srebotnik put up a defensive lob, completely out of position; a tap-in probably would have sufficed for Serena. Instead, she tried to hammer the ball and put it in the net.

"I just missed some easy shots. I think that was the difference," Serena said. "And she made hers."

Suddenly serving for the biggest victory of her singles career, Srebotnik let two match points slip away. On No. 3, though, Serena pulled a forehand well wide.

"It's like she wasn't there mentally. ... I'm really trying to figure this one out," Price said.

Serena stared blankly and spoke slowly during her post-match news conference. She was asked if "puzzled" would describe how she felt.

"No, I'm not puzzled at all," she said. "I just don't want to be here."

Now, Srebotnik will play No. 10 Patty Schnyder of Switzerland, and Pennetta will face qualifier Carla Suarez Navarro of Spain.

"I don't want to be satisfied," Pennetta said. "It's Roland Garros. To even think about reaching the quarterfinals or semifinals at a tournament like this is what anyone who plays tennis dreams about."

Orioles errors hand Red Sox 5-2 win after 13 innings

BALTIMORE (AP)—The Baltimore Orioles committed three errors in the 13th inning to hand the Boston Red Sox a 5-2 win in the American League on Friday.

Mike Lowell singled in the tiebreaking run and had three hits in all, with the Red Sox getting a club-record six stolen bases.

The Red Sox were held scoreless for 11 straight innings before breaking through thanks to some shoddy late fielding by the Orioles.

Tigers 7, Mariners 4

In Seattle, Detroit piled on seven runs in the first innings and could afford to go scoreless thereafter and still beat Seattle.

Curtis Granderson singled and doubled in the first inning alone, when Brandon Inge also added a two-run triple.

Rays 2, White Sox 1

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Cliff Floyd lined a leadoff, walkoff homer in the bottom of the ninth, giving the AL East-leading Tampa Bay a win over Chicago.

Floyd's fourth homer of the season came against a White Sox bullpen that had not allowed an earned run in 28 innings.

Rangers 3, Athletics 1

In Arlington, Texas, Kevin Millwood allowed just one run through six innings in his first start in almost three weeks, steering Texas past Oakland.

Rookie Brandon Boggs matched a career high with three RBIs for the Rangers.

Millwood struck out five and didn't issue a walk in his first start since straining his groin early in the month.

Yankees 6, Twins 5

In Minneapolis, Bobby Abreu tripled twice and scored all four times he reached base, leading New York over Minnesota.

Abreu tied his career high with those four runs, helping pitcher Mike Mussina overcome a four-run first inning to record his seventh win in eight starts.

Indians 5, Royals 4

In Kansas City, Missouri, Cleveland edged Kansas City, handing the Royals a 12th straight loss.

Cleveland's Grady Sizemore homered twice and made a game-saving catch for the final out.

Kansas City blew a 4-1 lead, committed a costly baserunning blunder and was robbed by Sizemore in the ninth. The star center fielder hauled in a liner with the tying run on second in the ninth and held on after he crashed into the wall, ending the game.

Blue Jays 10, Angels 4

In Anaheim, California, Lyle Overbay hit a pair of solo homers and an RBI single to give Toronto victory over Los Angeles.

Padres 7, Giants 3

In San Francisco, Khalil Greene drew a bases-loaded walk to force the go-ahead run in the 13th inning, and the San Diego Padres went on to beat the San Francisco Giants.

With two outs in the 13th, Greene worked his first bases-loaded walk for two years. A hit batter and then a two-run single gave the Padres a match-winning lead.

Phillies 12, Marlins 3

In Philadelphia, Chase Utley hit his major league-leading 18th homer to help Philadelphia down Florida.

Phillies pitcher Brett Myers won for the first time in six weeks, striking out a season-high 11 batters.

Cubs 10, Rockies 9

In Chicago, the home side overcame an eight-run deficit to edge Colorado.

Jim Edmonds and Mark DeRosa delivered key hits for the Cubs on a day for the sluggers. There were seven total home runs, and Jeff Baker hit a team-record four doubles for the Rockies.

Down 8-0 in the fourth inning and still trailing 9-1 in the sixth, the Cubs came back and sent Colorado to its fifth loss in a row.

Dodgers 9, Mets 5

In New York, Russell Martin went 4-for-4 with a homer and three RBIs to lead Los Angeles over New York.

The win gave former Yankees manager Joe Torre a win against his old rivals in his return to the Big Apple.

The Dodgers broke out of their offensive slumber in a five-run eighth to snap a four-game skid. Los Angeles scored only 12 runs in its previous seven games.

Reds 3, Braves 2, 11 innings

In Cincinatti, rookie Jay Bruce had four hits and scored on an error in the 11th as Cincinatti inflicted yet another one-run loss on Atlanta.

Bruce added to his remarkable debut week by opening the 11th with a single. Ken Griffey Jr. then singled past Chipper Jones, and the third baseman also failed to come up with a grounder for a game-ending error.

Bruce also doubled home a run and scored in the sixth, adding to his growing lore. Cincinnati's top prospect has become the fans' favorite while going 8-for-14 in his first four games.

Nationals 7, Diamondbacks 4

In Phoenix, Willie Harris snapped out of a slump with a tiebreaking three-run homer, helping Washington beat Arizona.

Harris went deep with one out in the seventh to put the Nationals in front 6-3. He had one hit in his previous 18 at-bats before the drive over the right-field fence.

The Diamondbacks have lost five straight.

Brewers 5, Astros 1

In Milwaukee, Ryan Braun homered and matched a career-high with four hits to give Milwaukee victory over Houston.

Manny Parra pitched six strong innings for the Brewers, allowing just one run to rebound from his terrible previous start. Houston dropped its third straight.

Cardinals 5, Pirates 4

In St. Louis, Albert Pujols homered for the third time in four games to set up St. Louis' win over Pittsburgh.

Pujols's 14th homer of the season was a two-run shot to center in the bottom of the first.

Todd Wellemeyer worked seven sharp innings for the Cardinals, allowing only one run, to clinch his career-best fourth straight decision.

A three-run double with two outs in the ninth cut the deficit to one, but the Cardinals hung on.

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West Division

Los Angeles	32	24	.571	_
Oakland	29	26	.527	2 1/2
Texas	28	28	.500	4
Seattle	20	35	.364	11 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

Philadelphia	32	24	.571	_
Florida	30	23	.566	1/2
Atlanta	29	26	.527	2 1/2
New York	26	27	.491	4 1/2
Washington	24	32	.429	8

Central Division

Chicago	34	21	.618	_
St. Louis	33	23	.589	1 1/2
Houston	30	26	.536	4 1/2
Milwaukee	27	28	.491	7
Cincinnati	26	29	.473	8
Pittsburgh	25	29	.463	8 1/2

West Division

Arizona	30	25	.545	_
Los Angeles	27	27	.500	2 1/2
San Francisco	23	32	.418	7
San Diego	22	34	.393	8 1/2
Colorado	20	35	.364	10

Yesterday's Games

Boston 5, Baltimore 2, 13 innings
Tampa Bay 2, Chicago White Sox 1
Texas 3, Oakland 1
N.Y. Yankees 6, Minnesota 5
Cleveland 5, Kansas City 4
Toronto 10, L.A. Angels 4
Detroit 7, Seattle 4
Chicago Cubs 10, Colorado 9
Philadelphia 12, Florida 3
L.A. Dodgers 9, N.Y. Mets 5
Cincinnati 3, Atlanta 2, 11 innings
Milwaukee 5, Houston 1
St. Louis 5, Pittsburgh 4
Washington 7, Arizona 4
San Diego 7, San Francisco 3, 13 innings

MEMORIAL SCORES

DUBLIN, Ohio (AP)–Scores from Friday's second round of the $6 million (€3.86 million) Memorial, being played on the 7,366-yard, par-72 (36-36) Muirfield Village Golf Course:

SECOND ROUND

Mathew Goggin	65-72	137
Kenny Perry	66-71	137
Jerry Kelly	66-72	138
Luke Donald	68-71	139
Nick O'Hern	70-70	140
Matt Kuchar	68-72	140
Steve Lowery	70-70	140
Geoff Ogilvy	69-71	140
Rod Pampling	67-74	141
Justin Rose	68-73	141
Jason Bohn	72-71	143
Rocco Mediate	70-73	143
Fred Couples	72-71	143
Carl Pettersson	68-75	143
Pat Perez	70-73	143
Mike Weir	71-72	143
J.B. Holmes	74-69	143
Ryan Moore	73-71	144
Joe Ogilvie	69-75	144
Daniel Chopra	76-68	144
Vaughn Taylor	71-73	144
Jim Furyk	71-74	145
John Mallinger	71-74	145
Robert Allenby	69-76	145
Johnson Wagner	78-67	145
Brett Quigley	67-78	145
George McNeill	73-73	146
Tom Lehman	76-70	146
Tom Pernice, Jr.	71-75	146
Nathan Green	75-71	146
Dudley Hart	73-73	146
Bill Haas	74-72	146
Cliff Kresge	73-73	146
Todd Hamilton	70-76	146
Ian Poulter	75-72	147
Tim Wilkinson	72-75	147
Bo Van Pelt	71-76	147
Kevin Na	75-72	147
Woody Austin	71-76	147
Paul Casey	76-71	147
Phil Mickelson	72-75	147
John Rollins	71-76	147
Mark Wilson	73-74	147
Chris DiMarco	75-72	147
Ryuji Imada	75-72	147
Richard Green	72-75	147
Tim Petrovic	73-75	148
Nick Watney	68-80	148
Arron Oberholser	77-71	148
Davis Love III	74-74	148
Stewart Cink	71-77	148
Ben Curtis	76-72	148
Ken Duke	71-77	148
Dustin Johnson	75-73	148
Stuart Appleby	72-76	148
Shaun Micheel	71-77	148
Charley Hoffman	74-74	148
John Senden	71-78	149
D.J. Trahan	73-76	149
Jon Mills	73-76	149
Sergio Garcia	72-77	149
Brett Wetterich	76-73	149
Lee Janzen	74-76	150
Aaron Baddeley	74-76	150
Bart Bryant	76-74	150
K.J. Choi	76-74	150
Dean Wilson	78-72	150
Parker McLachlin	73-77	150
Chez Reavie	73-77	150
Jin Park	75-75	150
Jeff Quinney	71-79	150
Zach Johnson	71-79	150
Trevor Immelman	72-78	150
Sean O'Hair	75-75	150
Anton Haig	71-79	150
Travis Perkins	76-74	150

By The Associated Press

The Week in Sports

MARK RABAGO

Defending champion Jets flash the No. 1 sign after their 9-8 come-from-behind win over the Fielders in the finals of the 2008 Senior League last Monday at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SaipanCell Patriots celebrate after capturing their third straight Major League championship last Sunday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Field in Oleai.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Matt Smith's Smithereens gained the top seeding in the playoffs of the 2008 Women's Recreational Spring Football League with 11 points following their victory over Wild Bill's Wild Fire and PIC's Paradise In Cleats last weekend.

Memorable Memorial Day Weekend for sports

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 2008 Family Fun Day Golf Tournament hosted by Laolao Bay Golf Resort last May 11 saw Jess "Mr. Unorthodox" Wabol win the individual category. Photo above shows the walkathon held prior to the golf tourney.

The 2008 Memorial Day Weekend was a memorable one for island sports as championships in Little League, tennis, bowling, and an island-to-island crossing were held last May 24, 25, and 26.

For starters, champions in all four divisions of the Saipan Little League Association were all concluded last Sunday and Monday at the Oleai Sports Complex.

The SaipanCell Patriots started things off by winning the Major League division following its ruthless 15-0 whipping of Dragons last Sunday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Field in Oleai.

The same day, the Lion's Heart were true to their name as they showed a lot of courage in exacting a 3-2 come-from-behind victory over the Jets in the Junior League.

The Jets, meanwhile, pounced on two crucial errors from the Fielders in the top of the seventh inning to score a come-from-behind 9-8 victory in the Senior League finals last Monday at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

In the Big League, the Falcons celebrated victory after beating Fielders in Monday's late afternoon championship game at the Tan Ko field.

Richard Leong and Ron Cal, for their part, won this year's 26th CNMI May Masters Bowling Tournament after topping their respective men's and women's 12-game series last weekend.

Leong finished the May Masters with a pinfall total of 2,543, good for an average of 211.92, while defending champion Cal wound up with 2,226 pinfalls for a solid 185 average.

In swimming, Lester Lapuz and Sarah Johnson bested 47 other swimmers to win the 6th Annual Escape from Managaha Island held last May 24.

Lapuz completed the 2.7-kilometer open water swim from Managaha Island to Micro Beach in 43 minutes flat, while Johnson won her third straight women's race after emerging from the surf in 43:21.

The 2008 edition of the DFS Micronesian Tennis Championships also concluded last week with Ji Hoon Heo winning the men's open title after his finals opponent, Jeff Race, begged off from playing because of illness.

Mayuko Arriola, meanwhile, hoisted the women's open tiara after beating fellow teenage tennis sensation, Vivien Lee, in a finals match that needed more than one day to complete.

In other news, 55-year-old Russian Vladimir Kovalevskiy visited Saipan recently but not without playing a number of ping-pong games at the Hyatt Regency Saipan, where he stayed, and at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium multi-purpose room.

Jess "Mr. Unorthodox" Wabol, meanwhile, won the 2008 Family Fun Day Golf Tournament last May 24 after firing a net score of 71.4

The past week also saw action continue in the PTI Inter-Government Business Basketball League, 3rd Annual Budweiser-Saipan Major League, Inaugural FMI Inter-Color Basketball League, and the 2008 Women's Recreational Spring Football League.

May Masters men's champion Richard Leong poses with women's champion Ron Cal during the awards ceremony of the 26th CNMI May Masters Bowling Tournament held last Sunday at Club V of the Saipan Grand Hotel.

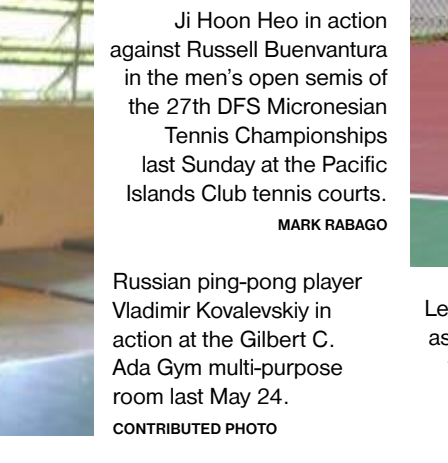
MARK RABAGO

Russian ping-pong player Vladimir Kovalevskiy in action at the Gilbert C. Ada Gym multi-purpose room last May 24.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mayuko Arriola goes through her serving motion in Day 1 of her women's open final against Vivien Lee last Monday at the PIC tennis courts.

MARK RABAGO



Ji Hoon Heo in action against Russell Buenvantura in the men's open semis of the 27th DFS Micronesian Tennis Championships last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club tennis courts.

MARK RABAGO

Lester Lapuz was the first swimmer to come ashore at the American Memorial Park after taking part in the 6th Annual Escape from Managaha Island held last May 24.

DAN KIMBALL

DAN KIMBALL

Sarah Johnson won the women's division of the crossing for a third straight year last May 24, proving once again that she is the queen of swimming in the islands.

Pierce, Celtics beat Pistons to reach NBA finals

The Boston Celtics got past an old nemesis to set up an NBA finals matchup with another rival–the Los Angeles Lakers.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Memorable Memorial Day Weekend for sports

The 2008 Memorial Day Weekend was a memorable one for island sports as championships in Little League, tennis, bowling, and an island-to-island crossing were held last May 24, 25, and 26.

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RJ wants another shot at junior championships

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

R.J. Macaranas wants to take part in the 2008 Callaway Junior Golf Tournament this coming July at the Sycuan Golf Resort in San Diego, California.

If he makes it, the CNMI would not have one but two representatives in the biggest youth competition in golf, whose previous champions include the likes of Phil Mickelson, Tiger Woods, Lorena Ochoa, and Jennifer Rosales.

Brentt Makana Salas, the son of former Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Carlos Salas and his wife Roxy, earlier qualified for the 7-8 age group of the championships.

In order make a second straight trip to San Diego and join Salas in the 2008 Callaway Junior Golf Tournament, Macaranas would have to shine in the Callaway Junior World qualifier set on June 24 at the Alhambra Golf Course.

"I will be in the most competitive junior world qualifier in any region around the world. In nine holes every year you must be scoring at least even par or better to qualify, where in other regions you may score anywhere from four to 15 over par. And this is just for the nine to 10 year olds," he said in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Even if he does not qualify to San Diego, Macaranas' body of work this year is already impressive.

The son of Richard and Becky Macaranas of Saipan tied for third place in the SCPGA Westlake Village Spring Classic held last April 13 after firing a score of 36.

The two-over-par allowed Macaranas to play in the tournament of champions at the SCPGA Bridgestone Spring Championships in the PGA course at Beaumont, California, set this weekend.

Last April 11, Macaranas and his dad, Richard, were awarded first place for the LBJGA Junior/Adult tournament after the duo combined for two-under par 25. "We were on the greens in regulation on every hole," Macaranas said.

And then on March 15-16, after working extra hard to prepare for the Los Angeles City Junior Championship, Macaranas wound up tied for second place, which was his best ever placing in a big event.

On March 15, Macaranas also won first place in the 10-and-under age group at the Long Beach Junior Golf Association Recreation Park 9 Championship. He finished with a three-over par 34 and won by 11 strokes.

The victory visibly had the golf prodigy excited.

"I played at Los Feliz from 8am to 10am, then drove down to Long Beach and continued my good play there. I was 'in the zone' all around, excellent short game at Los Feliz and long game at Lil' Rec. I even birdied the tough 158-yard par 3 No. 4 hole," he said.

Aside from the 2008 Callaway Junior Golf Tournament, Macaranas' immediate plans include entering the Golf Channel's Drive, Chip, & Putt contest in Irvine, California.

"I have a good chance of qualifying for the regional finals if my putting and chipping show up. My drives average 205 to 220 yards according to the GPS devices, and I can hit it over 250 when I'm lucky, so I feel confident on the driving challenge," he said.

This year Macaranas will also attempt to qualify for the U.S. Kids Junior World Championships at Pinehurst North Carolina. The qualifiers he will be playing are set tomorrow, June 1 (U.S. time), at Carlton Oaks Golf Course in San Diego, and Brookside Golf Course in Pasedena on June 16.

He added that he is still deciding whether or not to play in the 2008 San Diego Junior Masters at Carlton Oaks Golf Course. Macaranas said the tournament fee is $175, "so I may turn down their invitation."

Last year, Macaranas missed the final two rounds of the 2007 Callaway Junior Golf Tournament after scoring a 16-over par 74 in the first round and a 12-over par 70 in the second round. He missed the cut by 15 strokes.

NO SMOKING
Beginners Welcome!
Driftwood Womens Golf Club at Heartwell invites you to join the fun Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m.
Call

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

R.J. Macaranas, seen here receiving one of his awards this season, hopes to qualify for the 2008 Callaway Junior Golf Tournament set next month at the Sycuan Golf Resort in San Diego, California.

Tenai dominates Guam International Tennis Open

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Former Pacific Oceania Davis Cup player Lency Tenai won the men's open singles as well as the men's doubles open of last weekend's 5th Annual Guam International Tennis Open.

Playing at the Hilton Guam Resort & Spa, where he work as the tennis instructor under the Tennis Academy of Guam, Tenai won the men' singles championship after handily beating Shozo Nishiguchi, 6-2, 6-2, in the finals held last May 25.

Tenai earlier teamed up with Ken Klocke to win the men's doubles open, upending the tandem of Bill Camacho and Benjamin Dunn, 6-3, 6-2.

Camacho and Dunn were the same pair that defeated CNMI netters Chuck Sayon and Nicolas Son in the first round of the competition, 6-4, 6-3.

Tanai holds the Pacific Oceania record for most total wins and doubles wins. In six straight years that he represented the islanders in the Davis Cup, the 40-year-old netter from Solomon Islands compiled a 27-21 win-loss record, including 16-15 in doubles matches.

He saw action in a total of 29 Davis Cup ties for Pacific Oceania.

In other men's championship matches in the singles division, Alexis Penafiel topped the men's singles 4.5 after outlasting Sam Lai in three hard-fought sets, 6-4, 4-6, 6-4; Jose Gallego defeated Ian Batherson, 3-6-7-5, retired, to win the men's 3.0; Christian Penafiel beat Cory Morrison, 6-1, 6-4, to claim the men's 2.0 title; and Shozo Nishiguchi scored a 6-1, 6-3 win over Craig Tsuda to win the men's 35-and-over.

Tenai

In the women's category, Yumika Sugahara won the women's open championship following a clinical 6-1, 6-0 victory over Terea Tapu; Melycel Penafiel scored a 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (1) win over Aki Shintani to win the women's 3.0; Arlie Bonto bested Alina Bonto to take home the women's 2.0 tiara; and Rosanna Castro upended Peggy Paulino, 6-3, 6-3, to win the women's 35-and-over.

Champions in the doubles competition, include Peter and David Lai (men's 4.5), Nagagaki and Tan (men's 3.0), Hawes and Smith (men's 35-and-over), Catherine De Thoisy and Sandy Klocke (women's 4.0), Sumikura and Doi (women's 3.0), Sugahara and Dugan (mixed 5.0), Stadler and Cepeda (mixed 4.5), Cepeda and Wong (mixed 2.0), and Wyatt and Kastura (mixed 35-and-over).

Organizers of the 5th Annual Guam International Tennis Open earlier said that this year's tournament is in preparation for the hosting of a professional level tournament that will feature an invitational 16-Player Males Singles Challenge and an 8-Team Doubles Draw. The goal of the Guam International Tennis Open is to become a points-earning, professional-level tournament.

Confirmed players for the singles Challenge include Thailand's Danai Udomchoke, currently ranked No. 197 in the world. Just a little over a year ago, Udomchoke was ranked No. 77 in the world. Udomchoke played in all four tennis grand slam events in 2007, including advancing to the third round of the Australian Open losing to the 2008 champion in four sets. His doubles rank is No. 289 in the world.

SSC golf tourney on June 7

The 2008 Saipan Swim Club Golf Tournament finally tees off this coming Saturday, June 7, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

Showtime is set at 6am with shotgun start scheduled at 7am. The tournament will use the ever-popular double Peoria format and entry fee is $90.

Stewart

First place is assured $300 and a trophy, second place is $200 and a trophy, and third place is $100 and a trophy.

SSC head coach Michael Stewart said aside from the awards for the Top 3 in the double Peoria competition, first place in the low gross for men and women will also take home "awesome and fabulous" in-kind prizes as well as handsome trophies.

An awards banquet will also be held immediately after the conclusion of the golf tournament at Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

The 2008 Saipan Swim Club Golf Tournament will benefit the swimmers of the SSC.

Scheduling snafus snuffed out last year's 2nd Annual Saipan Swim Club Golf Tournament.

For more information about the 2008 Saipan Swim Club Golf Tournament, call Stewart at 288-9474 or Jess Wabol at Cheap Charlies at 233-3673. ***(Mark Rabago)***

August start eyed for SML Summer/Fall League

The 2008 edition of the SML Summer/Fall Youth Baseball League is tentatively set to start in August, according to Saipan Major League official Tony Rogolifoi.

In a media release, Rogolifoi said the local baseball association is hoping to kick off the developmental league for players 15-25 years old immediately after the conclusion of the 2008 Budweiser Saipan Major League, which currently has half of its regular season completed.

Rogolifoi, a CNMI Sports Hall of Famer, said team rosters should be accompanied by a player's proof of age eligibility such as driver's license, passport, or other forms of official identification.

He said team rosters should have a maximum of 25 players and teams should secure health insurance cards to guarantee coverage in case of injury during the games.

Entry fee for the 2008 SML Summer/Fall Youth Baseball League is $800 and is payable to the Saipan Major League. Rogolifoi is encouraging interested teams to start securing sponsors for their respective entrance fees and team uniforms. He said he will hold an organizational meeting sometime this month for the league.

For more information about the 2008 SML Summer/Fall Youth Baseball League, call Rogolifoi at 288-3515. ***(Mark Rabago)***